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## THE REPUBLICAN PROSPECT

THE sense of fatuity which pervades the debates in Paris is largely due to the fact that everyone present knows that nothing can be settled until after November 5th, and probably not until the new American President takes over next January. The United Nations are bombinating in order to fill the vacuum caused by the constitutional inability of the United States of America to conduct a foreign policy during the months preceding a presidential election.

Every American move to-day is conditioned by domestic politics. Mr. Truman's pathetic attempt to re-assert some control over foreign policy, and at the same time to capture a fleeting patch of limelight, by sending Mr. Vinson on a dramatic mission to Moscow, sputtered out in pure farce. Mr. Marshall treated him even more contemptuously than Mr. Byrnes on an earlier occasion. When the President, in 1946, without consulting his Secretary of State in Paris, approved the text of Mr. Wallace's foreign policy speech, Mr. Byrnes had Mr. Wallace dismissed. Mr. Marshall, since he could not dismiss the President, did the next best thing: he humiliated him publicly. This made no difference to Mr. Truman's own chances of re-election, which were nil, but it probably puts paid to the last Democratic hope of winning a majority in the Senate. The Republican machine will now, in all probability, gain as overwhelming a victory, and for the same sort of fantastic programme, as it did when it put the ill-fated Mr. Harding into power after the fall of Woodrow Wilson.

Under the Republicans, the great American purge may be expected to begin in earnest. The last survivors of the Roosevelt era, hunted down by the Committee on Un-American Activities, will be chased out of their hiding places in the obscure corners of Washington. They will be replaced by men who can say, with their hands on their hearts, that they pin their faith on free enterprise and the American Century, and believe that Herbert Hoover was the last hundred per cent. American President. After so long a period in the wilderness, the Republican bosses will be unable to tolerate many concessions to merit by the President in his appointments to office. The broom will sweep the State Department and the American Embassies throughout the world very clean. Not only Mr. Marshall, but his few liberal advisers, will go—including early New Dealers like Mr. Douglas and Mr. Harriman. In future we must expect to deal with personalities who have earned Mr. Dewey's patronage by political services.

With all this to come, it is idle to expect anything but verbal sparring during the coming weeks in Paris. The interval before the entry of Mr. Dewey can best be filled by thought and consultation on the part of Britain and her neighbours in Western Europe, both on the nature of the new American policy and on the response we should make to it. We must assume that there will be an end to the scruples which prevented Mr. Marshall, after a close study of China, from giving wholehearted support to Chiang Kai-shek, and to those hesitations which deterred Mr. Harriman from encouraging either General de Gaulle or General Franco. The policy, gingerly attempted by the State Department during the last two years, of assisting the "non-Communist Centre" will probably be brushed aside by the business men, who will soon dominate American policy. Their aim is a straightforward anti-Communist crusade which relies on "strong men" and prefers them as far as possible to the Right. Germany, where the American way of life, as a correspondent reports on another page, is now beginning to flourish among the ruins, will be preferred to a weak democratic France and to a Social-democratic Britain. Mr. Dewey is no Isolationist; but his brand of internationalism is aggressively American and coolly insensitive to the niceties of European politics. For his dollars we must expect that he will demand a return measured not in social reconstruction but in military strength.

At least there is one advantage. We shall know where we are. The contradictions and muddles of the Truman period will be done with, and it will be impossible to excuse indecision by doubts of America's intentions. In a few weeks' time, the United States will adopt the policy which Mr. Churchill preached at Llandudno. Judging by his public utterances, Mr. Bevin regards this policy as dangerous and unrealistic. He must prepare himself now for the struggle; and be ready, when the time comes, to present a clear-cut alternative in the name of Western Europe.

### The French Strikes

M. Moch claims to have discovered that the present wave of strikes in France derives from orders sent, just before his death, by Mr. Zhdanov to the French Communist Party, and that 120 million francs in "red gold" have been sent by the Cominform to the C.G.T. It is possible, but by no means necessary, to believe this story, especially in view of the support for the men's demands given by the *Force Ouvrière* and the Catholic Unions. Even the M.R.P. journal, *L'Aube*, has declared that it is a quite insufficient explanation of the strikes to ascribe them purely to Communist manoeuvres for political ends; and no less a person than the Bishop of Nancy has stated in a pastoral letter that "when it is the only means of winning just demands . . . the strike must be a duty." Strikes in nationalised industries are, of course "political," in the sense that their aim is to enforce their policy upon the Government; and the French Communist Party has made plain its determination to defeat what it calls the "Marshallisation" of France. Yet it is as well to bear in mind that the French miners had seen their real wages reduced by something like forty per cent. in the past nine months, and that they regarded the Government's offer of a fifteen per cent. increase in nominal wages as totally inadequate; in fact, the strikes in these circumstances would have happened, Moscow or no Moscow. The real facts seem to be that the solid stoppage in the coal mines and the sporadic strikes on the railways are both genuine expressions of mass discontent of which the Communist-led C.G.T. was delighted to become the organiser. The French C.P. doubtless also had in mind the consideration that, if organised labour in France is to have a chance of success against a Gaullist reaction, it must be kept in fighting trim by direct action in support of bread and butter demands. There is, of course, always the danger of large-scale stoppages getting out of

hand and developing into a chaotic general strike; but the evidence is that the C.G.T. is holding back, rather than encouraging, the striking railwaymen lest it give General de Gaulle an excuse for extra-constitutional intervention at a time of year highly unpropitious for working-class resistance. In striking for higher wages and against economies in the nationalised coal mines, the French miners' political demands are, by implication, that the Government should deal drastically with the profiteering middlemen who have contributed so much to the inflation of French prices, and should balance the budget by making the collection of taxes effective and not by placing the burden of the deficit on the backs of the working class. It did not need special orders from the late Mr. Zhdanov to persuade the C.G.T. to think up these fairly obvious demands.

### The Security Council

With the Security Council temporarily adjourned, the sessions this week of Uno's Political Committee have been occupied mainly by M. Vyshinsky's ingenious efforts to put the Western Powers in the wrong over the disarmament issue. Behind the scenes, the indications are that the efforts made by Dr. Bramuglia and the six "neutral" members of the Security Council to find a formula, by which some temporary, compromise agreement might be reached on Berlin, have ended in failure. In these circumstances, a "Western" resolution seems likely to be pressed in the Council and duly vetoed by the U.S.S.R.—after which the controversy will presumably be transferred for enlarged debate in the Assembly, with equally inconclusive results. Yet everyone knows that the future course of events must develop along one of three lines. The first is a general agreement between the Big Four on the future treatment of Germany as a whole—an agreement which might conceivably, though now very improbably, include the evacuation of Germany by all the occupying Powers. The second is Big Four recognition of the *de facto,* provisional partitioning of the Reich, followed by some realistic bargain which would permit the Western Powers to extricate themselves from the Berlin *impasse.* For instance, there might possibly be a reciprocal Russian withdrawal from Austria, whose Premier appears to believe that, with the Yugoslav demands on Carinthia out of the way, Moscow is now ready to take a more accommodating line about a peace treaty. The third is continuance of a long-drawn tussle between Russian propaganda *versus* Anglo-American air-lift, with all the attendant danger of accidents, frayed nerves, ultimata and a war—unwanted and insensate.

### Cold War on European Unity?

The Economic Commission for Europe, on which the Soviet Union and its associates are represented as well as the Western Bloc, is one of the most promising functional agencies of the United Nations. It is deplorable, therefore, that there should be signs of an Anglo-American intention to whittle away the functions of E.C.E. One recent move was to remove from the purview of E.C.E. the allocation of German scrap; and it is reported that Britain and America also want to form a strictly West European coal pool to replace the allocation system hitherto controlled by E.C.E. Britain also recently endeavoured—without success—to prevent the Timber Committee of E.C.E. approaching the International Bank for a loan of 15 million dollars to finance East European imports of timber machinery with a view to the delivery of greater quantities of timber to the West. Finally, there have been stormy meetings of the Industrial Development and Trade Committee in Geneva early this month. The question arose whether the Committee should deal only with *trade* within Europe, or whether it should also study the "development" of backward or war-devastated European countries in relation to trade. The U.S.S.R. and the other East-European countries on the committee wanted to include "development" in the terms of reference; and, at the outset, France, Holland and Sweden sided with them. Britain and the United States, however, took a strong stand against there being any reference to "development." This, they apparently thought, could be used as an argument for the extension of credits to East-European countries; and in the end the Anglo-American viewpoint prevailed. In these circumstances it seems questionable whether the Soviet Union and the East-European countries will continue to attend meetings of the Committee. If they do not, the Committee's work will be nugatory, since its whole object was to develop trade between East and West. Mr. Hector McNeil, who was head of the British delegation at Geneva, seems to have given the French delegates the impression that Britain had no further interest in the work of the European Economic Commission. We find it hard to believe that this represents the attitude of Sir Stafford Cripps, or other members of the Cabinet, who must realise that Britain's hopes of escape from economic tutelage to the United States depend largely on the recovery of Europe as a whole—the aim which E.C.E. has been steadily pursuing.

### The Steelworker and the Steel Bill

The opponents of steel nationalisation have been putting it about that the steelworkers' Trade Unions are in reality hostile to the Government's proposed measure, and have been making the most of an article by Mr. Brown, a former secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, urging the Government to let the industry alone for the time being. In the current issue of the Confederation's journal, the present secretary, Mr. Lincoln Evans, replies to this campaign by reaffirming the Trade Unions' support for nationalisation. Mr. Evans was a member of the Iron and Steel Board until it was destroyed a few weeks ago by the resignation of its non-Trade Union members. He contends that the rise in output in recent months has been due mainly to continuous working in the melting shops—an innovation which the workers accepted as their contribution towards the struggle for national economic recovery. Of course, a contributory factor was the intensified campaign for the collection of scrap from home sources; for without this the workers would not have had enough material to work on. Mr. Evans criticises the existing control system on the ground that it works only negatively—by restrictions—and has no power to prescribe positive action such as the industry urgently requires. In effect, Mr. Evans retorts upon the opponents of nationalisation that they are trying to make capital out of the workers' willingness to accept unwelcome conditions in order to make their contribution to the national effort.

### Control of Socialised Industries

How are nationalised industries to be given a leavening of workers' control, in default of which they will remain, for Socialists, incompletely satisfying experiments in State capitalism? And how are the Boards, nominated to administer these industries, and now sheltered by their Minister from detailed Parliamentary scrutiny, to be saved from the evil of autocracy? The most constructive answers that we have yet seen to these questions are to be found in a Fabian Society pamphlet, *The National Coal Board* (2s.), by Professor G. D. H. Cole. Developing arguments which are familiar to readers of this journal, Professor Cole is opposed to giving the Trade Unions, as such, a minority share in the responsibility for the conduct of socialised industries. He considers that in the coalfields progress towards self-government must be sought through making Colliery (and gradually Area and Divisional) Consultative Committees a living reality, to which there should be, step by step, a positive, though limited, delegation of executive powers. The National Union of Miners should stick to its proper functions—collective bargaining and representation of the workers' interests. On the management side, it is important to distinguish between the job of the technical manager—*e.g.,* in the pit—and that of the Area or Divisional administrator, who is apt at present to be selected rather for his knowledge of mining technique than for his capacity in administration. As for the N.C.B., Professor Cole reaches the conclusion that in the present transitional stage, until coal-mining and other socialised industries have made greater progress towards responsible self-government, Socialists will do well to accept the principle that the job of the Board's membership is to frame, for execution by administrators and technical managers, coal policy in a rather narrow sense. That is, acting in the public interest, the N.C.B. has got to "deliver the goods" in the form of optimum quantities of efficiently produced coal. Larger issues, however, may arise; and these, Professor Cole suggests, should be dealt with by a Supervisory Council, on which would be represented not only the Board and the N.U.M. and the industry's other professional associations, but also closely related industries and consumers' interests. The Council would have nothing to do with the day-to-day administration of the mining industry, but would review all the activities of the administrative Board and make recommendations to the Minister on all matters of general policy, including nominations to fill vacancies on the Board. We commend the suggestion to Mr. Gaitskell's consideration. At present he is in the somewhat invidious position of having to act as arbitrator between his own nominees on the N.C.B. and the Miners' Union, with only such "briefing" as he can obtain from the civil servants of his Department. A Supervisory Council with which the N.U.M. was associated, and on which (we would suggest) some M.P.s might well have seats, would be a valuable agency in keeping the wider picture before the Minister.

### Workers' Education

Big changes have taken place in education since the "Workers' University," in the form of the Workers' Educational Association, was formed forty-five years ago. There has been a change not only in the system and content, but in the attitude of the workers themselves. The present campaign of the W.E.A. to extend and enhance its work is particularly opportune because there is a tendency to think that adult education is "taken care of" in the provisions made by education authorities for extension classes, night schools and technical education. But the W.E.A. was never intended to supply vocational training for workers. It is concerned with the art of living, not with earning a living. It has sought by enlisting the active support of the universities and their staffs, to provide for workers wider interests and a fuller culture. And it has done its job well. Now it is increasing the range of these interests. Subject courses have multiplied to meet the changing emphasis of our times. Science, for instance, is being introduced more widely, although philosophy, theology, psychology and the humanities (to accept the invidious distinction which does not treat science as one of the humanities) are still subjects with the bigger appeal. Musical appreciation is another. Full-time tutors are being used extensively, in addition to part-time lecturers and tutors. But the number of students is not increasing in proportion to the number of courses, which makes the present campaign all the more important. There is a feeling—at least in some areas—that the younger generation of workers are neglecting their opportunities for equipping themselves as better citizens, partly perhaps because of a greater preoccupation with increasing their technical competence in purely vocational classes but mainly, and regrettably, because of the counter-attraction of "the flicks" and "the dogs" and "the pools." If the inertia is really a symptom of a new cynicism and escapism, then the W.E.A.'s job is the more urgent and socially necessary.

# MR. CHURCHILL'S DEFEATISM

THE significance of Mr. Churchill's Llandudno speech is its complete defeatism. He believes that we must accept American policies, whether right or wrong, as blindly to-day as he did throughout the war. In the course of three years America has swung from an extreme of anti-Germanism to an extreme of anti-Communism; from a rather naive attempt to woo Stalin by concessions to an equally ill-judged attempt to browbeat him with atom bombs. When it should be the prime duty of British statesmen to exercise a restraining influence and to curb the excesses of American hysteria, Mr. Churchill has chosen to stimulate them in every way.

The fact is that Mr. Churchill's attitude to Washington is no better and no worse than that adopted by the Communist leaders in the satellite States. They must follow the party line of the Kremlin, first when it orders them to stand on their feet, and then when it tells them to stand on their heads. Mr. Churchill goes through the same performance. First he says "pastoralise Germany," and then "rebuild her industries." Yesterday he calls Stalin a gentleman and to-day a Genghis Khan. The Communist says, "My Kremlin right or wrong"; Mr. Churchill, with equal subservience, follows the extremist Washington line.

Ever since 1945 it has been the unique strength of this country that, unlike our neighbours in Europe, we have not been divided into a Right which servilely reflected American requirements, and a Left taking its orders from Moscow. It is this division which is slowly and steadily grinding to pieces the democracy of Italy and France. But here, until last Saturday, we had successfully avoided these fatal ideological divisions. Both the Labour Party and the Conservative Party had remained sturdily British parties, and had resolutely refused to degenerate into the propagandists of either American free enterprise or Russian Communism. It was this essential unity of the British people which had permitted us to achieve the first stages of our peaceful social revolution, and should enable us to exercise a pacifying influence on international relations. If Mr. Churchill has his way, he will turn the Conservative Party into a British adjunct of Mr. Dewey's Republicans as the Communists to Moscow.

For the policy which Mr. Churchill propounds is not that of all America, but of those reactionary Republicans who denounce Mr. Truman and Mr. Marshall as pinks and Leftists. Mr. Marshall has often tried to damp down anti-Communist hysteria, and to make E.R.P. what he first stated it to be, a plan for the peaceful reconstruction of a viable Western Europe. Now Mr. Churchill, in a campaign speech for Mr. Dewey, denounces prospectively, as a worthless scrap of paper, any settlement short of the unconditional surrender of the Kremlin.

Mr. Churchill's terms for peace with Russia are just as total and therefore just as impossible of fulfilment as the unconditional surrender laid down at the Casablanca Conference. The wicked men in the Kremlin are told to clear out of Europe and get back behind their 1938 frontier. If they do so, Mr. Churchill anticipates that all the peoples of Eastern Europe will rise together triumphantly and accept the American way of life. It is clear enough, therefore, that these terms are not put forward as a basis of discussion, but as an ultimatum designed to compel the Russians either to surrender unconditionally, or to fight.

Apparently Mr. Churchill believes that they may accept these "righteous claims" because they have no way of defending themselves against America's atomic bomb. If he really believes such nonsense, he should consult experts. No scientist, no responsible soldier claims that the atomic bomb or the other new weapons of mass destruction have replaced old methods of warfare and rendered unnecessary the use of land and sea power. The Russians, like the Germans, have always been dubious of the policy of strategic bombing, and a sober analysis of its effects during the last war shows that on this point they were probably right against Mr. Churchill and Bomber Harris. Of course, the atom bomb may have altered everything. But it would be folly to assume that the Russians, even if they believed this, would climb down before an ultimatum. We must reckon that, if faced with the sort of threat which Mr. Churchill proposes, the "wicked men in the Kremlin" would resist more tenaciously than Hitler and be supported more stubbornly by their own people.

Not unnaturally, Mr. Churchill's speech has been a roaring success among the Republicans in the U.S.A. It has told America all the things she most wanted to believe, and concealed from her all the ugly facts which it was most necessary she should understand. But what of its effect elsewhere? Will it really strengthen the chances of Western Union to tell the French that we must now give an ultimatum to the Russians which will almost certainly result in the occupation of France by the Red Army, and a civil war of ferocious bitterness? Will Scandinavia, or Belgium, or Holland rejoice to hear the news that nothing but vast stockpiles of atom bombs and unlimited rearmament can save democracy? Or, to come nearer home, does Mr. Churchill imagine that the ordinary, decent people of this country will hear his message with enthusiasm? There will be some, no doubt, who will say, "If it's got to come some time, let's get it over." But the vast majority, if they believe Mr. Churchill, will do so in a mood of desperation and defeatism.

The Llandudno speech gives the Labour Government an unrivalled opportunity to repudiate Mr. Churchill's introduction of American party politics into the field of foreign affairs. Since the notorious "Gestapo" broadcast, Mr. Attlee has not had such an opportunity to castigate and to rout the Tories, and to rally to the Government all those who believe both that the peace can be saved and that Britain has not, and must not become, an American satellite.

The Government's answer is obvious enough. It is true that to-day, if war were to come, the only defence available against the Russians would be the unrestricted use of atom warfare. It is true that Western Europe could not stand up against the Red Army, that Persia and Iraq would probably fall, and that China and South-East Asia would make little resistance. But these are reasons surely for averting a war rather than making one inevitable. The fact that we rely to the extent we do on atomic bombs is not a proof of strength but of a terrible weakness, which will only be intensified if, as Mr. Churchill desires, the British armed forces are increased to 1,500,000 men.

For armed strength, though it might ultimately win the war, is no defence whatsoever against Communism, and the danger to-day is not that the Red Army will suddenly march—why on earth should it?—but that Western Europe and South-Eastern Asia will fall a prey to Communism without the Russians moving a single soldier. It is not the Red Army, but social disintegration and economic crisis, which have made the Italian Communist Party the strongest in the world outside Russia, and delivered the French Trade Unions into the hands of Thorez and Duclos. If Britain were to build up her armed forces to 1,500,000 men, and so jeopardise all chances of bridging the gap and achieving economic recovery, she would simultaneously increase the British Communist Party from its present paltry 100,000 into a mass party on the French or Italian model.

This, then, should be Mr. Attlee's reply to Mr. Churchill. We recognise that Communism cannot be fought with atom bombs, but only by social reconstruction, and that our prime aim must be the creation of a Western Union which is Communist-proof because its peoples have achieved a standard of living under which Communism has no attraction. In this aim Socialist Britain has already given a living example of what can be done. We have few Communists here because our people are getting a square deal.

In the second place, the policy for Britain is not to prepare for an inevitable war, or to make a war inevitable by demanding the unconditional surrender of the Soviet Union, but to *win time* during which the main defences of Western Europe—the economic and social defences—can be put in order. The worst thing that anyone can do to-day is "to force the pace" or "to bring matters to a head." What is needed is a *détente* which will enable us to make adequate use of Marshall Aid and so to achieve economic independence of America by 1952.

It is against this background that our defence policy must be considered. Its aim is not to win the next war—a meaningless phrase for anyone in Western Europe—but to strengthen our diplomacy in its object of winning time. Rearmament can under no circumstances be permitted to jeopardise social reconstruction, because, if it does, the battle against Communism in Europe is lost. It must, therefore, be the Government's prime aim to exert a restraining influence on America. The Americans would scarcely start a war without our consent; they rely on us for the defence both of Western Europe and of the Middle East. If we give them the assurance, as Mr. Churchill would have us do, that we are ready to back any ultimatum they may deliver, and to rely on atomic strength in the struggle against Communism, we are signing away not only our own independence but the future of Europe. Our task is exactly the contrary one, to tell the Americans that under no circumstances will we support any ultimatum; to warn them against relying on the atom bomb; and, in detail, to work towards that "agreement to disagree" on the basis of the *status quo* which both America and Russia require if they could only see their own interests through the clouds of hysteria and suspicion.

## THE U.S. AND THE WORLD

[In a series of three articles, of which this is the first, a Special Correspondent examines the questions whether a slump in the United States is probable, whether the remedial measures likely to be taken by the U.S.A. would have adverse reactions elsewhere, and whether it is desirable and possible to erect defences against them.]

THE economy of Western Europe, and especially of Britain, France, Italy and Benelux, is now geared to that of the United States. In this sense the Western world is at least temporarily an economic whole in which the same basic laws run. And, since prosperity is indivisible within any given system of economy, a failure in one part will be felt by all the others in varying degree. If the failure is great, or affects much of this wide trading system, economic crisis will become general.

Such are the broad principles which now govern the non-Communist world. No doubt their present deep engagement in the affairs of Europe may seem improbable and marvellous to many Americans: the fact remains that America cannot again become isolationist—or not, at least, so long as she retains her present leadership. For the same reason, it is of the highest importance that Europeans should watch the development of the United States economy. Their well-being in the near future will depend largely upon what happens in the factories, fields, and markets of the United States.

The psychology of the Great Depression has never really lifted from America. Even to-day, when Americans are enjoying a boom of almost unprecedented buoyancy, they are privately and publicly afraid of slump. Anxious forebodings march in step with soaring profits. President Truman may have found it convenient to rattle the Republicans with charges of provoking uncontrolled inflation: he could do this profitably just because the inflation which is now going on is

generally understood to have escaped control. At frequent intervals this year the President has talked of the "creeping dangers of inflation" and of other signs of approaching peril. As prices, profits, and the currency circulation top new summits of achievement, the President's words are increasingly echoed by bankers and businessmen who are certainly unmoved by electoral considerations.

On the assumption that nothing will be done to modify *laissez-faire*, the pessimists may be right. But it does not follow that the history of twenty years ago will repeat itself. The difference from 1929 is very great. This time the danger is seen. The next President will scarcely emulate his predecessors of the Depression with prophecies of complacent optimism. He is much more likely to come into office armed with detailed plans for dealing with breakdowns as and when they may occur. The prevailing opinion appears to be one of prudent confidence in American ability to save their economic system—and with it the system of the Western world—from the worst effects of another (and expected) cyclical crisis.

This American awareness may reassure Europeans who cannot help seeing where an American collapse must lead their own countries. What is now important is to examine how the Americans mean to avert the dangers which all foretell. Can the United States maintain the present boom, or something near it? If so, how will this be done and what will be the consequences?

There is no mystery about the general reasons for the United States' prosperity. Reconversion (from war to peace economy), which began with hard-headed promptitude in 1945, saved the basic industries from immediate depression. The spending of savings and bounties amassed during the war, together with a wide extension of such methods of consumer credit as instalment buying, kept up domestic consumption. High production for these and other reasons, stimulated further by growing efficiency in many branches of manufacture, brought profits to remarkable levels.

The danger signals began winking as far back as 1946, but weakly and intermittently until the export setback of 1947. Even to-day the superficial picture is one of unbroken and unexampled prosperity. Only when cautious eyes penetrate beneath the surface do the signs of deterioration become evident. These are not yet particularly serious. Reconversion continues, although at a slackening pace. More worrying is the progressive distortion in the sharing of prosperity. Company profits after tax were twice as high in 1947 as in 1945; average weekly earnings, meanwhile, had risen by only 10 per cent. This gap has grown wider during 1948. In the first six months of the year profits made by 525 leading corporations had gained as much as 28 per cent. over the level of the same period of 1947. Wages have not kept pace with this.

The pattern is familiar enough. The rich are getting richer and the poor poorer. So far, the contrast is not so great as to have produced a collapse in purchasing power and provoked serious over-production, but something of this kind is bound in the ordinary way to develop soon. Cash sales at department stores began dropping off months ago, and were supplemented by what promised to be a dangerous spurt of instalment buying. If the end of reconversion were to occur in the near future, and nothing were put in its place, there would be every likelihood that rising unemployment might precipitate a general slump in the domestic market.

It is precisely here that the American authorities have become active. Roosevelt tackled the collapse in the capital goods market by the public works of the New Deal; the Democrats to-day are helping to ward off another failure with a relatively small but significant injection of re-armament. Having maintained the market by converting industry to peacetime production, they are now retracing their steps a little by maintaining it through a re-reconversion to wartime production. This method has the advantage, by no means negligible upon the eve of an election, of pleasing the armed services and their powerful lobbies in Congress.

Another great difference from 1929 lies in the enormously widened scope of American policy. To-day the prospects of exporting goods and capital seem almost unlimited. While it is reasonably certain that current levels of rearmament cannot keep unemployment down to its present low figure of little more than two millions (in 1940 there were still nine million unemployed), it is no less certain that higher exports could go far to achieve this. Hence the importance of foreign grants, loans, and investment to the proper workings of the American economy.

The Marshall Plan is not directly a means of investment abroad; but it has become, whatever its authors may have originally intended, a plan to smooth the way for such investment; for the winning of new foreign markets; and, as a necessary part of this, for the conservation of free enterprise against Socialist tendencies in Western Europe. Congressman Mundt put this succinctly when he said the other day that E.R.P., "in addition to enabling the countries of Europe to resist Communism, will serve to rehabilitate normal European markets so that they can absorb American products normally and thereby help to stabilise the world in peace." Mr. Mundt rightly saw that a market collapse might prove fatal to peace.

It remains to be seen how far American exporters may be able to increase their turn-over with the Old World and the traditional overseas markets of the Old World. They would be strangely blind if they neglected the attractions of British, French, and other colonies. More immediately calculable is the extent to which Americans hope to be able to place their surplus capital accumulation, now piling uncomfortably high, to profitable use abroad. One of the first steps to be expected after the establishment of a German Government in the Western Zones is the lifting of the ban on foreign investment in Germany. There is much to suggest that American investors have already agreed with German shareholders on conditions for capital investment. We may then expect to see a rush of "private dollars" to Germany. Something of the same thing is already happening in Japan.

Apart from the boundless opportunities in Germany and Japan, American capital can find plenty of attractive outlets. Not the least important clause of the Foreign Assistance Act (Marshall Plan) was the guarantee, stretching over 14 years, that American investors in the E.R.P. countries can take out their earnings, or part of them, in dollars which these countries are obliged to provide. Reports suggest that the French aircraft industry, the Italian motor car industry, and other important manufacturing units in Western Europe, are already the subject of intense American interest. Nor is there anything secret or obscure in the principle of this. "Encouragement of American private capital investment in Western Europe," the American Information Service stated on April 6th last, "is in accordance with a principal end-objective of the American aid programme."

"Although the United States is prepared to increase the scale of assistance it has been giving to the economic development of the American Republics," Secretary Marshall told the Pan-American Conference at Bogota, on April 1st, "it is beyond the capacity of the United States Government itself to finance more than a small portion of the vast development needed in these Republics. The capital required through the years must come from private sources, both domestic and foreign. And it is obvious that foreign capital will naturally gravitate more readily to countries where it is accorded fair and equitable treatment."

The examples could be multiplied. But the conclusions, surely, are clear. The United States is faced with the dangers of a slump, and will defend itself by every method known to free enterprise. For a time, at least (and not even a short time) this defence is likely to prove successful. Meanwhile, what of the effects of all this on the rest of the capitalist world?

# PARTITION: THE ULSTER STANDPOINT

[The following article by the Minister of Health, Northern Ireland, is a reply to the contribution from a Dublin correspondent published in these columns a fortnight ago.]

ARE the people of Great Britain really as lacking in perception as Mr. Costello appears to suppose? I think not. The present head of the Eire Government has been campaigning across the Atlantic in an effort to whip up support for the extinction of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom by making it part of the Eire Republic. This is an intolerable act of aggression against Ulster, an attempt to smash the constitutional settlement embodied in legislation rather more than a quarter of a century ago.

Not less reprehensible is the method by which Mr. Costello is seeking to achieve his aim. He is attempting to persuade the public, both in America and in Great Britain, that the border which separates Ulster (and therefore the United Kingdom) from Eire is an obstacle to Eire's participation in strategic measures for the defence of Western Europe. No one, surely, can fail to see through this argumentative device.

Britain and other nations in Europe are working out plans for their common security against attack; and the fact that they are separate nations, with different forms of Government, is no hindrance to their co-operation. If Eire were not so self-centred, so anxious to enjoy immunity from attack by sheltering behind Britain's defence forces, she would play her part in strengthening the security of Western Europe—partition or no partition. But no. Eire is trying to exploit the international situation for selfish ends: trying to use Ulster as a bargaining factor: saying in effect to the British Government, "Surrender Ulster to us or do without our help if an emergency comes."

It is an ignoble attitude, which soothing professions of friendship for Britain cannot conceal. In the last war neutral Eire was saved by the exertions and sacrifices of Britain and her Allies. Readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION have already been reminded of the vital strategic importance of Ulster in the Battle of the Atlantic. There is no reason to suppose that Eire would have helped the Allies even if Ulster had been annexed. Similarly there is no assurance that, if Ulster were handed over to-morrow, Eire would be a belligerent should war break out again. Mr. Costello has consistently refused to declare himself in favour of such a course. He wants from Great Britain a blank cheque to be filled in as he pleases.

But Ulster has something very definite to say about this. As part of the United Kingdom, and because both Government and people were eager to make their contribution to victory in the last war, Ulster took part in the struggle. It will be the same again if the need arises. The explanation is that Ulster's allegiance is to the Crown and that allegiance will not change. In no circumstances will Ulster agree to become part of a non-British republic outside the Commonwealth. The loyal people of Ulster will not rise to the bait that is being dangled before them in the form of a promise of "a wide measure of local autonomy subject to the supreme control of an all-Ireland Parliament in Dublin."

The disingenuous plea is put forward that "differences in religion and outlook should find an accepted place in the Irish Nation." But the differences between North and South are so deep and wide that no such formula can reconcile them. The North says, "We are subjects of the King"; the South says, "The King is a foreign monarch to whom we will give no allegiance." The North says, "The Union Jack is our flag"; the South says, "We have no flag except the tricolour." The border did not create this gulf; the gulf was there before, and the border is merely a recognition of the fact.

It is asserted that Ulster could not exist without British subsidies. That is untrue. Ulster a

only pays its way and balances its budget but makes a handsome contribution to the British Exchequer. The amount of Imperial contributions for the present financial year is £21,500,000, and the aggregate sum so contributed since the Northern Ireland Parliament was set up is in the neighbourhood of £215,000,000. Again, Ulster's great industries, which produce such a high percentage for export, are a source of economic strength to Great Britain: they are helping substantially to bring about the economic recovery of the United Kingdom, and in particular, at this moment, to close the dollar gap.

The Ulster-Eire border will remain, but this need not mean that the two communities "face each other with underlying suspicion and hostility." We in Ulster want to live on amicable terms with the people of Eire, but we demand that the permanence of our constitutional position shall be recognised and that there shall be no interference from the South in our internal affairs. You cannot live on terms of amity with a man who is constantly trying to burgle your house. Ulster and Eire can be good neighbours on one condition—that each develops its policies in its own way and pursues a policy of "live and let live."

Ulster made its choice a generation ago, and at every election since then the decision to remain within the United Kingdom has been overwhelmingly reaffirmed. If there is any meaning in the principle of self-determination, Ulster has the right to decide its own future and no external pressure, plotting or propaganda can take that right away.

WILLIAM GRANT

## A LONDON DIARY

I CANNOT understand why the Prime Minister has been so obstinate in refusing to Civil Servants suspected of Communist activities the right to be represented before the Committee of Inquiry. His first statement in the House of Commons was admirable. He announced the appointment of three retired Civil Servants to sift the evidence and give advice to Ministers, and he specifically promised to suspects the right of representation. Since then, this concession has been withdrawn, despite the fact that at the T.U.C. Conference at Margate this year this was the only important issue on which the floor nearly defeated the platform. I know there are all sorts of difficulties. Dismissal from the Civil Service is not the same thing as internment or conviction before a court. The Committee is not a tribunal or a court of appeal, but a purely advisory body. The evidence is not evidence in a legal sense, and the witnesses are not witnesses. So cross-examination is impossible, and anyway M.I.5 cannot be expected to reveal its sources of information. But still I am not satisfied. During the war Herbert Morrison, in dealing with people under 18B, managed to surmount obstacles just as great. When the detainees appealed, they were allowed to be represented either by a lawyer or by a friend. I cannot help feeling that some similar arrangement is possible for the suspected Civil Servant. This may seem a small thing to bother about, but it is not. The Civil Service detests the atmosphere of purge, and if stringent security checks are necessary—as they obviously are in certain Departments—the accused should be given as much chance to put his case as a soldier in the Army. The Government really had two alternatives. It could have conducted the whole affair as its predecessors did, in complete secrecy, and pretended that it was not taking place. Now, having deliberately given publicity to the activities of M.I.5, it must recognise that public opinion—outside as well as inside the Civil Service—will demand every safeguard against unfair dismissal, including the right of representation.

* * *

Whilst Montgomery never undertook a battle unless he had accumulated forces and munitions larger than those of his enemy, General Slim, the new C.I.G.S., had to wage war very differently. For Slim there were no opportunities of insistence to a Prime Minister that he could not begin his task until he had been given all the materials he demanded. Nor was he ever in the happy position of planning a campaign at home with telephones connected to all those Ministries he might want to badger. All the war the Far Eastern Front was a poor second cousin to the Middle East and Europe. Slim had to fight with any units he could scratch together, his lines of supply were tenuous and depended for their maintenance on improvised assistance from air and sea. His army was not all of one kind—Indians, West Africans, some Burmese were mingled with Dominion troops and British soldiers, some of whom had been trained at home and some in the East. There were never enough of them and their equipment consisted of anything that could be spared from more popular fronts. Yet he welded his forces, by the strength of his personality, into one of the most heroic and efficient fighting units anywhere in the world. I have always enjoyed the true story of his interview with Aung San, who could have been hanged by the British as a brigand and murderer. Fortunately, Slim saw that he was a patriot who had decided that it was to the interest of his country to side with the British. He promised to work with the British and grinned widely when Slim told him to go and organise the P.V.O.s on the understanding that he would be tracked down and hanged if he side-stepped. Slim was not a Sandhurst Army entrant, but came in by way of the First World War, when he was already old enough to have had considerable experience of civilian life. This, no doubt, accounted for an unusual flexibility of mind and an ability to see beyond the conventional army structure. Co-operation with the other two Arms has never been a difficulty for him. He has not had to rely, as so many good generals do, solely on his administrative staff to manage his supplies. He has been an excellent Commandant of the Imperial Defence College where, in these days, senior officers really study world affairs. He was a good choice, too, for membership of the Railway Executive. As C.I.G.S., I should imagine that one of his aims will be at once to eliminate the Army's notorious waste of man-power, and that he will be the first C.I.G.S. not to demand more and more troops—he will see the defence problem in relation to the economic condition of the country.

* * *

I hear that in the North of England the "Ajax Houseguards," a volunteer organisation of amateur policemen formed unofficially to augment the depleted regular force, grows in strength and confidence. Its members patrol in an official-looking uniform, each man accompanied by a dog. There have been many of these "citizens' watches" in the past, from the Bow Street Runners to various kinds of commercial police, though they have never achieved the status of the American strike-breaking forces armed with rubber truncheons and *carte blanche* in the matter of indemnified assault. The Home Office have never encouraged them, but a number of Chief Constables have lately given them a qualified blessing, their view being that, if we can't get policemen, we ought not to discourage auxiliaries of any kind. Lacking the status of constables, of course, they consequently lack the respect and support which the public usually give to the authentic Bobby. One of them recently stopped a Lancashire man late at night, asked him where he was going, and called for the production of his identity card. "Not likely," said the Lancastrian, "you're not a policeman." The "houseguard" sought a way out of this impasse by way of assault, for which he was duly fined £5 by the local magistrates. The prosecuting solicitor told the Bench that "a fairly large body of public opinion is completely confounded that the Home Office should have permitted such a body of men outside the police force to perform duty which the police alone have the right to do." I believe he was right about public opinion; but he was wrong about the Home Office, which has no power to interfere. The police could interfere if the volunteers dressed like policemen or represented themselves to be policemen, but apparently they don't do this. If the Committee now investigating police pay and conditions of service produces recommendations that revive the flow of police recruits, the "houseguards" may reconsider their position and find there's no future in it.

* * *

Let us assume that all the charges against Dr. Aurel Varannai, Reuter's correspondent in Budapest, are true. Let us assume that he did erroneously and on unchecked evidence report that an arrested man had been shot in the leg by the Hungarian police, that his messages did contain anti-Soviet jests and exaggerations of the activities of the political police in Hungary, including (in his private letters) the suggestion that to send messages such as an anti-Communist British press would enjoy, was likely to endanger his personal safety. Do such mistakes, exaggerations and criticisms justify the Hungarian Government in arresting Dr. Varannai and trying him on serious criminal charges? Clearly not, unless the Hungarian Government wishes us to believe his statement that journalists are in danger from the political police; clearly not, if the Hungarian Government wishes us to take seriously the recent strong declarations by its representatives in Geneva in favour of the freedom of the press.

* * *

So many stories of intolerance and inhumanity, some true and some untrue, come from behind the Iron Curtain that when an entirely authentic and pleasant example of Soviet behaviour does turn up, we ought to put it on record. Dr. Stefan Lorenz is one of the world authorities on ornithology and the behaviour of animals. He was in the German army as a doctor, taken prisoner by the Russians, and given up as dead by his family. After being moved from place to place, he finally found himself as head of a hospital in Armenia. He had very little to do there, and started to write his *magnum opus* on Animal Behaviour. He was constantly warned that he would get into trouble if an inspecting General found him, and for a long time he hid the manuscript. But there were so many alarms that he finally got careless, didn't hide it, and in the end was found at work on it by a General, who asked him what he was doing. He explained he was writing a scientific book, and gave the details. The General looked at it, and then gave orders that he was to be set free from hospital work to have all his time to finish the book. He was moved several times after that, but the order remained good. When he was repatriated, he asked if he might take the MS with him, and was given permission to do so, provided he left a typed copy behind him. He stayed for three months to get this finished, and is now back in Vienna with his completed book.

* * *

I was sorry to read of Commander Gould's death. He was an extraordinary individual. His exact knowledge of out-of-the-way subjects was encyclopaedic. Like the elephant, Gould never forgot anything, and his memory was photographic. Apart from being expert on ancient typewriters, sea-serpents and a miscellany of other strange subjects, he was a recognised authority on the marine chronometer and wrote the standard book on the subject. Not everyone who listened to Gould on the Brains Trust knew that for seven or eight years he toiled making missing parts, repairing and putting into working order John Harrison's four famous chronometers. These were the instruments which in 1773 won the £20,000 offered by the Government and turned navigation from being a chancy business into an almost exact science, thereby giving the British mercantile fleet enormous superiority. He carried on his person a surprising assortment of massive and ancient watches. He was best known, of course, as a Brains Truster, but, although eminently successful, he would have been more at home, I always thought, on the American programme "Information Please."

CRITIC

## BACKSEAT DRIVERS

BACKSEAT drivers in chorus,
Taken each time for a ride,
We cry "There are road-blocks before us,
And we know we're about to collide."
But the drivers, dizzily speeding,
The backseat drivers deride,
And step on the gas, not heeding
The passengers trapped inside.

When drivers running their races
Get on the wrong side of the road,
The passengers, strapped in their places,
May mention the Highway Code,
But they only turn round to remind us
That bombs in the back are stowed,
And we guess that the bombs behind us
Are just about to explode.

If the rule of the road we mention
The drivers don't seem to hear
And they only pay any attention
When we tell them how well they steer.
The chauffeurs announce with elation
They will safely arrive at their goal,
While we note, with extreme agitation,
That the engine is out of control.

Bounced and battered and shaken
At every quadruple bend,
We must go wherever we're taken,
We're not allowed to descend.
"We" are the backseat drivers,
And "They" are the men at the wheel,
But we want to be survivors,
And that is why we squeal.

SAGITTARIUS

## THIS ENGLAND

**Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.**

**Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.**

I have no fear. . . . As a rule, the Communists will not attack an Englishman unless provoked.—*Empire News.* (B. E. Hurley.)

Improvement in the international situation would worsen the position of British seaside resorts, said Councillor B. J. Pearson, of Broadstairs.—*Evening News.* (R. W. Gale.)

Less spectacular perhaps than Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Bikini tests give a far clearer warning of the lingering and insidious nature of the radio-active agent, which makes it an ideal weapon for use on civil populations.—Dr. ——, reported in *Star.* (I. Medd.)

Mr. Wilfred Walkers, 60, sets off to West Africa to-day to try to persuade 250,000 mothers to dress their piccaninnies in his new-type "Snappy-nappy" instead of the traditional loin-cloth.—*Daily Mirror.* (Mrs. E. F. Hopkins.)

For forty years Jim Mandy earned a living in vaudeville letting people swing a 10 lb. sledge-hammer at a 50 lb. rock balanced on his head.

He thinks that one day there might be a new demand for this form of entertainment. So, just in case, he keeps in training by beating his bald head with blocks of wood every morning.—*Reynolds News.* (L. Barker.)

Mr. Andrew Fountaine (King's Lynn) told the Conservative Party conference at Llandudno to-day: "We may be vermin and may not matter a tinker's cuss but at least we are not to be catalogued with that group of conscientious objectors, national traitors, semi-alien mongrels and hermaphrodite Communists who have the audacity to call themselves what they are not—a British Government. In two years they have destroyed one-third of our Empire.—*Evening News.* (Thomas Peatfield.)

## OKTOBERFEST, 1948

*(By a Correspondent)*

THE first road sign that greets you on entering Munich by car is a reminder in black Gothic lettering on white that "Death is so Permanent." These signs, together with a large number of others in the U.S. Zone, were erected by the American Military Police in the winter of 1945-6 under protest of the Catholic Church (who repudiated the contention). Only these signs remind one of that first post-war winter in Munich. The very atmosphere has changed.

It has not been sufficiently noted in the British and American press to what fantastic degree the currency reform of last June has altered the face of Bizonia. It is still generally believed here and in America that life in Germany is a living death, that the people are denied the bare necessities of life, that the country is ruled by Military Authorities. The shock of seeing the truth is tremendous.

Munich, 1948, is more like Munich, 1938, (which sinister connotation is lost to the Germans) than Munich, 1945. Only the ruined buildings are evidence of a war waged and won against German Fascism. In 1945 there was no *Oktoberfest*. This year the festival started in September and is attracting thousands of people from all over Bavaria day and night. To many Germans the fair is a symbol of their economic recovery, to some it is sufficient evidence that the war was never lost at all. The fair on the *Oktoberwiese* is nearly six times the size of Hampstead Heath fair and more sumptuous, noisy and extravagant than any fair in England could be to-day. In steaming kitchens, chickens are roasting in double rows of twelve over the open fire—they can be bought for eight marks each.

But the *Oktoberfest* is only a single indication of the radical change of life in Bavaria. The shops, bare for over three years, are filled with groceries, meats, sausages, leather goods, men's suits, "Paris models," paper goods. People complain that things are too expensive—and they are for the majority—but no one can explain where it all comes from. Some assure you simply: "We have recovered economically. If the Americans left us alone we would be a first-rate Power again in no time." Others cynically suggest that America is pumping in dollars and goods to make a ready and willing ally for World War III. The more rational believe that goods were kept "under the counter" while the Reichsmark (now replaced by the Deutsche mark) was of no value. This hardly explains, however, the opulent supplies of meat and dairy goods once more available; they suggest that with too much slaughtering taking place (while meat fetches high prices) and a *laissez-faire* economy taking its undisturbed course, a new economic crisis and new privations may be just around the corner.

Meanwhile, the "haves" are making hay while the sun shines. At any medium restaurant in Munich you can eat better and more than in the best West End restaurants in London. There is no limit to the number of courses one is permitted to consume. If you like you can have soup, *hors d'œuvre*, beef *tartare*, joint, poultry, fish, sweet, savoury and coffee. The law for giving up coupons for meat, sugar and fats in restaurants is generally not observed. In most places you pay 50 pfennings more for a meat course instead of giving up coupons. One or two restaurants are stricter. There, if you can't or won't give up coupons, you have to contend with roast goose which is served at six marks a portion. Having shown your goodwill in this manner you can then, of course, have anything else on the menu.

Meat rationing in the shops is equally corrupt and a-social. If you are willing to pay you can have meat every day—twice if necessary. The biggest shock is to see the kind of people who are availing themselves of the fruits of the New Prosperity. I expected black marketeers, *nouveaux riches* speculators, American civilians. But the "haves" to-day are the survivors of the "haves" of yesterday. They are filling the cafés, the newly opened bars and beer gardens, the fashion salons. You can see them at Munich's most fashionable restaurant, *Humpelmayer*, just off the Karlsplatz. The people sitting here are no black marketeers, no *nouveaux riches* spivs. They are Bavarian aristocrats with their Munich-tailored Bavarian folk-suits, wealthy industrialists who have come back to head the new German economy, "gentleman farmers," *Gutsbesitzer*, retired Army officers, bureaucrats and Government officials.

Once more well fed, the German upper-middle classes are demonstrating their "economic recovery" elsewhere. The theatres are full, first nights are as elegant, as well dressed, as snobbish as anything to be encountered in the West End of London. In this atmosphere a new nationalism, a resentment of foreign authority and the accompanying symptomatic manifestation of anti-Semitism are finding support. The anti-Semitism is directed—more often than not wrongly—against Jews in Military Government offices. It is *their* fault that Germany's industry is not allowed to flourish as it was in the '30's. It is *they* who are condoning Socialist activities among the workers. The new party incorporating these feelings is the *Bayernpartei*, which is finding enthusiastic adherents among all classes in Bavaria. Their slogan is *Münchner für die Münchner, Bayern für die Bayer.*" Their aim is to create a sovereign Bavarian State, with Munich as its capital, in which there is no room for Communists, Socialists, Prussians, Displaced Persons, Jews, Americans and other non-Bavarians. The party is absorbing many of the re-tried Nazis who are swarming from German de-Nazification courts to take up former positions. Ilse Koch, who had manufactured lampshades from the skins of political prisoners in her husband's concentration camp, has had her life sentence cut to four years by the Americans, and is expected to be a free woman any moment from now. A German *Weihbischof*, Dr. Anton Scharnagl, known to be the father of several illegitimate children, a brother of the *Burgermeister* of Bavaria, and well-known former Gestapo informant, has been released for "lack of evidence." As was revealed in the Bavarian Parliament last week, anti-Fascists are afraid to give evidence at these de-Nazification trials for possible reprisals against them by their employers.

Almost more sinister than the results of these trials are the methods by which "justice" is achieved. Though I found no first-hand evidence that these courts are corrupt, and that bribery flourishes (as is claimed freely by American correspondents), I found the prosecution methods strangely incompetent. This was demonstrated to me in the proceedings against ex-General Halder, a former Chief of Staff of the *Wehrmacht*. Listening to the pleas of the Prosecuting Attorney I frequently wondered if I had made a mistake, and was, in fact, listening to the defence counsel. In his final speech, counsel for the *prosecution* requested that (a) the full punishment of four years be reduced to three years in view of special circumstances, (b) the defendant's time already spent in prison should be deducted from the sentence, and (c) only 30 per cent. of the defendant's means should be confiscated.

The court found Halder not guilty, but a reverse judgment would have made little difference to the sentence as demanded by the prosecution. Schacht attended the trial as a witness for the defence and was applauded by the public, as was the judges' pronouncement.

American policy in Germany, which is mainly concerned with handing over to the Germans all controls as rapidly as possible, strengthens the feeling among Germans that they were right, and that the Western Powers fought the wrong war. There is a grim "I told you so" tone in the voice of many Germans when conversing with Americans. Hitler was right—Communism is spreading across the world; Hitler was right—Russia is not capable of living in peace with

her neighbours; Hitler was right—the Jews are terrorists. The American press says so, does it not?

The Americans working as civilians in Military Government offices have no easy job. The career boys and army hangers-on have mostly gone home. Those who have the re-orientation of Germany in their hands are mostly sincere, able, peace-loving individuals. Yet they have no alternative but to follow directives sent down to them from headquarters in Berlin. The American-controlled press in the Zone has been "playing up" the Berlin crisis with emphasis on the "fight for freedom" which the gallant Berliners are waging against their Russian oppressors. There are not many Americans who happily endorse this policy, but to oppose it would be to oppose State Department policy; and, with their wives and children securely installed in Germany, many Americans find it impossible to make the heroic gesture of resigning, especially as there is no indication that their successors could deviate from the directives.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Americans (who now have to buy cigarettes from the Germans because the U.S. Army is rationed while there is no shortage of German cigarettes) are the laughing-stock of the German population.

With a Church preaching nationalism and the Government (controlled in the main by the Christian Socialists) going hand in hand with the Church, with the Nazis coming out of de-Nazification courts to take up responsible posts and to finance new parties, the American long-term attempt at re-education can now be counted a dismal failure.

But the failure of the Left-wing German intellectuals—the *Innere Emigration*—has been even greater. At a time when that part of the new generation, which is not wholly contaminated by the Nazi teachings of the '30's, look for philosophical guidance which neither the Church nor the political parties are able or willing to give, the bulk of the intellectuals have totally surrendered to popular pessimism and despair. Even a man of Erich Kästner's integrity has thrown in the sponge and lost himself in reveries of nihilism.

His main contribution to the revue at the *Schaubude* cabaret in Munich is a chanson-poem about the destruction of the world by poison gas in A.D. 2000. At the end of this charming ditty, graphically illustrated by a horrific back-cloth, the singer steps forward to announce that there is nothing wrong with the song—except the date.

## "PANDITJI"

INDIANS always use this title when they speak of Jahawarlal Nehru. The rest of the world, which has divined from afar the bigness of his lovable personality, can understand why they use the last syllable "ji," which indicates affection and respect, but it is odd that they stress, with the word "pandit," the fact that he is a Brahmin.

He has never concealed his agnosticism and his rejection of Caste with all its rituals and pretensions. That is precisely why Indians emphasise his aristocratic birth. Born in an old and wealthy family, with tastes that fitted him for a life of cultured leisure, he flung in his lot with the down-trodden masses, chose the hard way of rebellion and voluntarily spent a third of his adult life in prison. Always it is renunciation that wins the heart of India. The Buddha renounced his throne and Gandhiji stripped himself of everything but a loin-cloth. Nehru never went to dramatic extremes. He is no ascetic; he dresses with taste and delights during his scanty hours of leisure in the consolations of literature. But he followed his father's example in sacrificing not only wealth but ease. Had not the sufferings of the peasants moved him to action, he might have spent his life in the paradise of Kashmir, writing books as notable for their grace of style as for their sweep of thought. The peasants love him because it was not only against the British Empire that he fought. From the earliest days of his public career he struggled to make an end of the greedy tyranny which the landlords of his own class have fastened on the villages.

Without this renunciation, Nehru could not have won a place in the heart of India second only to Gandhi's. This man has charm and fire. He is, moreover, by temperament a fighter. When first I met him, eighteen years ago, he was a prisoner in the keep of an old Moghul fortress. Scantily dressed as he was in shorts and shirt, I noticed at once his muscular frame and his quick athletic movements. He has been known under sudden provocation to use his fists impulsively. Deep though his veneration for Gandhi was, he never adopted his leader's pacifist ethics, or for that matter his asceticism and his rejection of Western civilisation. Nehru accepted non-violence as the tactics suited to an unarmed population. It was his chivalry and his spirited attitude of defiance, no less than his modern faith in science and planning that made him the natural leader of the younger generation. A legend that he was personally irresistible gave a magic to his name, and often the legend worked.

Charm, imagination, a trained intellect, the impulse to act and the will to renounce—these things make the power of this exceptional man. His personality stands revealed in the books he wrote in prison, above all in his *Discovery of India*. But Nehru's is not a simple character and history has assigned to him a complicated role. Always this sensitive man has stood delicately poised on the frontier of two worlds. Cambridge trained him in the Natural Sciences; his own tastes steeped him in European literature and the philosophical study of world history; yet fate and the instincts of his blood made this cosmopolitan the leader of Indian Nationalism. Again, when he came under Gandhi's influence, two worlds fought for his allegiance. He kept his own rationalistic view of life; he differed openly and often from the Mahatma's policy, and yet he never quitted his leader's camp. Another dilemma confronts him to-day. A Socialist of the Left, he heads a Ministry which reflects all the strands that go to make up the Indian nation, from Big Business to the Untouchables. So long as it was a party of rebellion, Congress managed, not without difficulty, to hold its various factions together in a disciplined phalanx, united by their confidence in Gandhi. To-day, the Socialist wing has declared its independence, as it was bound to do, and will come forward at the next elections as a party of Opposition. Nehru may be in his own mind broadly in sympathy with the positive aspects of its programme, but could he, after a brief term of responsibility, lay down the task of shaping India's destinies with which the whole nation has entrusted him? He will have to compromise, knowing very well that when he has to concede something to the forces of property, he may be forfeiting the trust and affection of those whose ideals he shares. The experience will be painful; for, as readers of his fascinating *Autobiography* know, he is not prone to complacency.

In yet another sense Nehru stands between two worlds. Amid the clash of East and West, he is in charge of the foreign policy of the one great Asian Power whose weight, moral and material, could influence the scales in the choice between peace and war. His recognition of the part the British people played in easing India's achievement of Independence may incline him to retain some friendly ties with the Commonwealth. But he has made it clear that India will not identify herself either with the American Bloc or the Russian. To stand passively aloof would be neither possible nor morally defensible. The test of India's maturity and of Nehru's stature will be his ability to turn this attitude of neutrality to a creative use. Can he use the prestige that belongs to him as the greatest of living Indians and Gandhi's heir, to play the part of a mediator and voice the will of the world's silent millions for peace? There is no figure in the front rank of statesmen whose personality would so certainly evoke a friendly response. Courage for this act of leadership he possesses, if he can find the right way to approach the bewildered nations. No country has a better right than India, with her perennial problems of hunger and over-population, to combat the insanity that squanders on armaments the resources that might fertilise the waste places of the earth. Her Premier is the man to rally us for this constructive adventure.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

## THE THAMES AND WILLIAM MORRIS

THE plan for converting the towing paths beside the Thames into a public river walk from Teddington to Cricklade will be received with enthusiasm both by lovers of the river and those who enjoy long walks. The report of the Committee in 1884 that towing was then almost non-existent on the Thames hardly fits in with the account of the famous and boisterous voyage made by William Morris and his party four years before from Kelmscott House, Chiswick, up the Thames to Kelmscott Manor, Oxon. With Morris, in addition to his wife and two daughters, were William de Morgan, Cormell Price and Richard Grosvenor from whose diary of the trip the extracts that follow are taken. They were towed most of the way in a small houseboat called the *Ark*, belonging to Salters, with a rowing boat attached, the *Albert*. I followed their course myself this summer as far as Oxford by steamer—also Salters.

The trip took seven days, the men spending the nights on board—with de Morgan rousing them at daybreak for unwilling swims—and the women staying at inns. There was fishing and sculling in intervals of towing, and occasionally they got stuck in the mud or collided. At Wargrave, when the *Ark* ran aground, "all the males of the party gave conflicting orders in loud tones (mostly emphatic); eventually W. M. restored order and happiness by taking off his boots and socks, slipping into the mud and pushing her off." Most of the cooking was undertaken by Morris, "in the seclusion of the cabin, and in due time filled the whole party with delight and with provisions of a most satisfactory kind." He was in his usual boisterously expletive form throughout the trip, and at Moulsey Lock "gave vent to an emphatic big D— to the undisguised delight of several parties in pleasure boats ranged along the side of the Lock." There were long talks, too, on "the inequalities and injustices of the existing social system," carried on "with vigour, emphasis and eagerness, different solutions being suggested."

The most dramatic scene occurred at Maidenhead, where they found themselves heading into the middle of the Regatta that was in progress. "The *Ark* was sculled majestically through a crowd of inferior craft and passed under Maidenhead Bridge not without dignity amidst considerable excitement." Just after this Morris made the remarkable statement that Cliveden Reach was the ugliest part of the whole river! They were towed past Bisham Abbey and landed to look at Lady Place, and on the left bank passed Greenlands, now the headquarters of the Administrative Staff College. The charm of the Kennet near Caversham inspired Morris to call one of his best tapestry designs after it.

Iffley was responsible for de Morgan's pun that it was the original birthplace of the hypotheses. The fashion for this form of humour had been started at the Magpie Inn at Sunbury. "On arrival, W. M. exclaimed, 'What a stink!' The waiter replied, 'It is nothing sir, I assure you.' R. C. G. put in, inquisitively, 'Is it a sewer?' Waiter, in answer: 'Yes, sir, quite sure.'"

The expedition provided the foundation for the Thames river scenes which form so large a part of *News from Nowhere*—the delectable vision of England as Morris hoped to see it. The revolution he hoped for was to have been firmly established by 1948, and it is interesting—perhaps a little sad—to compare his idealistic forecasts with reality.

The many bungalows that are now scattered all along the early part of the river are no improvement on his description of "the hideous vulgarity of the cockney villas of the well-to-do, stockbrokers and other such which in olden time marred the beauty of the bough-hung banks." Eton has not fulfilled the forecast of Dick in *News from Nowhere*. "Of course we cannot use it quite as the Founder intended, since our ideas about teaching young people are so changed from the ideas of his time, so it is used now as a dwelling for people engaged in learning, and folk from round about come and get taught things that they want to learn, and there is a great library there of the best books. There are plenty of boys who come to learn boating and swimming."

Reading is called "a nice town enough in its way, mostly rebuilt within the last hundred years," but between here and Caversham Morris would have been disappointed at the lack of success which "the new order of things has had in getting rid of the sprawling mass with which commercialism has littered the banks of the wide stream."

Nor has free hospitality come true at the inns, which Morris foretold at Dorchester; "the village guest house still has the sign of Fleur de Luce which it used to bear in the old days when hospitality had to be bought and sold." Indeed, the inn at Sunbury, still going strong today, no longer serves its guests with the fare that Morris' party enjoyed: "Pickled salmon, poached eggs, ham, etc.," though for lunch at the Bridge Hotel, Windsor, it was still possible to drink lemon squash as they did. The population as a whole is hardly devoted, as forecast, in summertime to haymaking, except for the small number of "Obstinate Refusers who indulge in building and carving," and not every girl is pretty, simply dressed and always smiling—an odd requirement from the husband of the Pre-Raphaelites' favourite model of passivity. And yet Morris would not have despaired: as he ends *News from Nowhere* waking up from his dream to find himself at "dingy Hammersmith: 'Strange to say, I was not despairing.'" He could believe that the people of his Utopia were saying to him: "Go back and be the happier for having seen us, for having added hope to your struggle. Go on living while you may, striving, with whatsoever pain and labour needs must be, to build up little by little the new day of fellowship, and rest and happiness. Yes, surely! and if others can see it as I have seen it, then it may be called a vision rather than a dream." GEOFFREY MANDER

## NORTH LONDON

It is an absence in ourselves we wind
from skeins of sudden passageways, or rooms
whose sacraments were made with marshy fields.
That merciless green world we never knew
sometimes in alleys in the afternoons
suffers an acrid requiem of privet flowers.

Somewhere the terraces disclaim our world
and errant light shines through. "Highbury bore me"—
that is real, and still the chestnuts peel
the spring from sticky fingers. From the schools
the names of rivers come in chorus, wild to recall
the reasoned villages, Keats walking to Walthamstow.

The roads have names of dying poets. The clouds
have to themselves the Bernese Oberland. The squares,
Barnsbury, Canonbury, Lloyd. O they are filled
with absence, hardly history. This is no soil
which vanquished heirs can sow; yet these are real—
the incantations in the heart, the elegies which cross
this black unlovely plain, where history's still
the absence in ourselves, the perfect loss.

ERNEST M. FROST

# The Arts and Entertainment

## THE THEATRE

### The Foreign Players

THE most august of theatres has not escaped—how should it?—deterioration from the general decay of civility and from the particular sufferings of France. How I wish I could applaud the performance of *Le Misanthrope* at the Cambridge Theatre, but the distinction traditional in the Maison de Molière is nowhere conspicuous. Finance, I know, makes it impossible for the Théâtre-Français to employ great stars. But what excuse is there for the unnamed producer's treatment of the two marquises? They should quiver with the elegance of the dragonfly: instead, they galumph like cart-horses.

*Le Misanthrope* can hardly be called "good theatre": it has few situations, no surprises, hardly even a plot. Yet it is a masterpiece by the force of characterisation and wit; and it offers two of the most rewarding parts ever written. The Célimène at the Cambridge is obviously experienced. The Alceste of M. Pierre Dux deserves more detailed criticism: it is a brilliant effort by an admirable actor in a role for which he is not ideally suited.

During the writing of the play, the character of Alceste, I suspect, took the reins and made Molière deviate from his plan. It is not that Alceste becomes at moments a tragic figure—so does Harpagon. It is that Molière betrays more sympathy with his attitude than is reasonable. Consequently so thoughtful a critic as Faguet was led to declare that the play was intended to recommend sincerity and to deprecate coquetry. This is preposterous, a backwash of romanticism that would have staggered the contemporaries of Molière. The professional hater of mankind who chooses to live in fashionable saloons is properly a figure of fun. (Célimène would be similarly ridiculous only if she decided to inhabit the Thebaid.) Alceste's conceit, moreover, is overweening. The trouble is that Molière, while displaying these absurdities, could not help showing more fellow-feeling with his butt than the comedy could assimilate—so well did he know the horror of inescapably loving a creature whom he could not respect.

M. Dux's conception of the part seems to me impeccable. He avoids the temptation to ennoble a comic personage, though he rightly achieves moments of pathos. He looks, as he should, desperately neurotic; his appearance suggests that of Molière, who was melancholy as well as gay. But he falls short of intensity in pride and disgust. A torpedo-boat rather than a battleship, he just has not the guns for so heavy an engagement. Finally, he is diminished by the naturalism from which few modern players in France, and even fewer in England, can ever escape, a naturalism that deflates modern performances alike of Molière and of Shakespeare.

Actors, no less than cooks and philosophers, differ, according to their nationality, in tradition and technique. The visits, therefore, of Italian and French companies to the Cambridge Theatre must be welcomed not only for such pleasures as they provide, but for the chance to compare their respective styles with what prevails upon our stage. In the daily life of Italy, the emotions are displayed, as they are not here, in expressive varieties no less of voice than of gesture. This gives their actors a signal advantage over ours. In the streets of Naples you may any day come upon an old beggar transformed by anger into a human tornado. But if an Englishman acting Lear tries to match in voice and gesture the violence of his words, he is likely to be condemned as "unnatural" or "ham." And as a rule not unjustly, because such violence is alien to his temperament. I suspect our national self-control to be a recent acquisition. Shakespeare did not write for inhibited actors: indeed only eighty years ago, Taine was appalled by the boisterous lusts and rages flamboyant in the London streets. An admirable improvement, since then, in education and conduct has brought about what may be called the "emburgessment" of every class and unluckily, or perhaps inevitably, this has led to a certain insipidity, a fear of emotion, with which is associated the glorification of the "Little Man" by the politicians and popular newspapers of both Left and Right. This has gone far to destroy, not, goodness knows, the gallantry of the English, but their sense of the heroic. We praise "unassuming fortitude, modest courage." There was nothing modest or unassuming in Alexander the Great, St. Teresa, Raleigh or Dr. Johnson. Or in Lear, Macbeth, Othello; or, for that matter, in Portia, Viola, Rosalind.

This brings me back to the theatre, from which indeed my thoughts had not wandered, for it was the Italian performance of the *Œdipus Rex* that set them upon the subject of the "Little Man." Sig. Renzo Ricci, as the protagonist, did not strike me as a great actor, but he exhilarated me hugely by a vehemence such as I have not seen for years. He went all out. This was acting, whereas what we usually get upon our stage might be better called behaviour. I don't suggest that the Italian players, with all their natural plasticity and freshness, are more gifted than ours: they are differently gifted. Nowhere else, I suspect, could Mr. Priestley's plays be so exquisitely performed as they are in London: a sensitive naturalism is here carried to perfection. But Sophocles and Shakespeare demand another style, which they seldom get. The last *Œdipus* I saw happens to have been Sir Lawrence Olivier, and I admired him more than I do Sig. Ricci. But then he is one of the very few English players who can now rise to the grand manner, and even he shows it best in comedy.

The Italian *Œdipus* had the advantage of a glorious set, derived from the Palladian Theatre at Vicenza. Sig. Ruggieri, whom it was a pleasure to see again, made an admirable Tiresias, and the best acting of all came from the youthful Sig. Gassman as the Messenger. The Jocasta was handicapped by looking more like the daughter of her husband than his mother. The dancing, I must add, reminded me of La Gingold at her most inspired. Gozzi's *Corvo* was interesting because it displayed the still living tradition of the Commedia dell'Arte, a tradition otherwise known to us only in the debased, if delightful, acts of circus clowns. As in the *Œdipus* the acting was properly stylised, if not very refined; and it impressed one by its superb vitality. At *L'huomo che ha ucciso Pilato* I found my inadequate Italian a greater handicap than in the other plays, for the story is most intricate. I wish I could have read the play first: it seemed highly imaginative. The set, as in the other productions, was remarkable, and there were outstanding performances by SS. Gassman and Ricci. Our dear Censor of Plays roused himself to impose a change in one of the costumes. The first act takes place as it were in the wings during the performance of a Passion Play, and the actor playing the character who takes the part of Christ was forbidden to wear robes or even a beard. The only result was to make nonsensical what never could have seemed blasphemous. The censorship is an otiose survival from the days of Walpole: dearly as I love all things picturesque, to retain such a luxury in these hard times is, I fear, inexcusable.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

## RADIO NOTES

*The Story of Munich*, now in progress, is as important a series of programmes in its own line as the B.B.C. has ever attempted. Consideration of the venture must await the completion of the programme, but one aspect of it deserves immediate comment. Here, for the first time, is the kind of planning we have long been asking for, a concerted undertaking by all the relevant departments of the Corporation, a combined operation between Features and Talks to produce an authoritative statement and analysis of an historic event of great importance. May this mark the end of B.B.C. departments working in isolation from, and often, I suspect, in disregard of, one another. This successful interleafing of a feature-programme with explanatory and expository talks makes one regret that similar collaboration did not take place in, for instance, *The Ideas and Beliefs of the Victorians*.

Some of the difficulties which must have confronted the editors of *The Story of Munich* were

evident in the latest programme in the series *Let Justice Be Done*, an outline of the law relating to treason as exemplified in the case of William Joyce. The trial was altogether too recent for the use of the adventitious aids of dramatic reconstruction; there could be no impersonation of the actual participants in the case. There was merely the impersonation of abstract legal voices, and to that extent the drama of the trial was diluted; indeed, the programme became rather a series of legal arguments than a trial. Yet I found the programme fascinating, largely, I believe, because of the associations evoked. What made the programme were the recordings of extracts from Joyce's first and last broadcasts from Germany. How surprisingly moving, more than three years after the event, that last recording was: Joyce defiant to the end—and drunk.

Let me not pretend that the name of Ludwig Holberg meant anything to me before I heard the Midland production of *The Drunken Husband* last week. An early eighteenth-century writer, Holberg was, it seems, the founder of Danish drama. Certainly *The Drunken Husband* was a delight to listen to; it went naturally into radio, though to what extent this was due to Mr. Bamborough's translation and adaptation I cannot tell. But this story of the besotted, henpecked peasant who is persuaded on awaking from a more than usually heavy drinking bout that he is the lord of the manor, had a most attractive freshness. It was agreeably produced by Mr. Edward Livesey, and the name-part agreeably played by Mr. Charles Stidwell.

It is the critic's misfortune that he cannot listen to two programmes at once. So I missed Mr. Harold Nicolson's birthday review of the Third Programme. As may be seen from the version in *The Listener*, it was a most important talk. Mr. Nicolson is troubled by what he calls "a decline in the integrity" of the Third Programme, "a tendency to consider whether the items broadcast could be made more palatable to a larger number of people." He finds, and I am sure he is right, the reason for this decline in the influence, often unconscious no doubt, on B.B.C. officials of the findings the Listener Research organisation. Mr. Nicolson puts the responsibility for the decline in integrity not on the Third Programme producers themselves but on "their superior officers." Mr. Nicolson speaks as a former governor of the B.B.C. Since I last wrote on this subject a correspondent has reminded me that the most ambitious and in many ways most splendid of all Third Programme projects, *A History in Sound of European Music*, has not returned to the air this season. It would be interesting to know why.

WILLIAM SALTER

## THE MOVIES

**"Women in Our Time" (This Modern Age, No. 22), at the Leicester Square Theatre**
**"Sleeping Car to Trieste," at the Leicester Square Theatre**
**"Le Diable au Corps," at Studio One**
**"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," at the Prince of Wales**

One of these days I—normally the least militantly feminist of my sex—hope to make a short film about men, one to end for all time those short films which men make about women.

This mild outburst is due to seeing *Women in Our Time*, the latest of the series "This Modern Age." The visuals are interesting, and well cut, the commentary is unexceptional where it deals with specific problems, like equal pay for equal work, the shortage of teachers and nurses and the need for women in industry; but there is a patch of patronising fulsomeness in the middle, about our wartime activities, which outclasses anything the old M.o.I. films did when they were buttering us up preparatory to cutting rations again or putting up coupon rates on clothes. Is it possible that any woman enjoys being praised in this way?

My film about men, in case any are interested, will show that in wartime we women always knew that we could depend on you to stand shoulder to shoulder with us, that we appreciated the cheerfulness with which you worked long hours in factories beside us, and made sacrifices of your pockets, and the turn-ups of your trousers, and how glad we were to give you back these things through victory; because you deserved them. It will discuss whether experience in mixed batteries has unfitted man for the home, taking the negative view, and will end on a tactful note, the special problems of men over forty-five, and a strong plea for the provision by law of more chairs, so that you can sit down at work: this being the least we can do for you, considering what you've done for us.

In the same programme with *Women in Our Time* is *Sleeping Car to Trieste*, made presumably because, years ago, *Shanghai Express* proved a popular formula, being followed by *Rome Express* which repeated its success: so now why not try another journey, with a different terminus but almost exactly the same train-load on board, the crooks and ill-assorted lovers, each with one characteristic continually emphasised, the "careful" Scot never being anything but carefully Scots, the garrulous bore unceasingly garrulous, and a bore? Most of this picture, I feel, might have been made from the cutting room remnants of the Rome and Shanghai efforts without further shooting, but I'm sure it wasn't, because Jean Kent, Albert Lieven and Derrick de Marney pop in and out of one another's wagon-lits, playing as nicely as the artificial story allows, and I know they weren't aboard those other trains. Oh, for one flash of real wit, one moment of unexpectedness!

*Le Diable au Corps* is sensitive, exquisitely directed and acted, and touching in its evocation of the miseries and raptures of a boy's love for an older woman. Emotionally he is a man, so far as shouldering responsibility is concerned he is a child—and he cannot even pay his share when they are out together: no important detail of those intensities of first love, on any plane, seems to have been overlooked in a production which is as fresh in feeling as the subject is old. Not until you think about this film afterwards (and you certainly will think of it afterwards, if you see it: there are passages of haunting power and delicacy) are you likely to realise what extraordinary demands have been made on your sympathies by two of the most unpleasant lovers ever shown with absolute honesty on the screen.

The neurotic, exacting boy, resenting the war he is too young to share, is seen against the background of 1918, during the Germans' last advance, persuading the wife of a man fighting in the trenches to abandon her work in a hospital to devote herself to him. And she, to give herself more completely is willing to agonise needlessly a man who may be killed at any moment by not replying to her husband's desperate letters from the front, tearing them up unread in the boy's presence. But you cannot think of these people in terms of simple screen moralities; they are alive; this is not what love ought to be, but what, in fact, it often is. A remarkable film.

*The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* is very funny in patches. It is nothing like as funny as the short story by James Thurber from which it is blown up into a "vehicle" for Danny Kaye and—of all surprising people—the Goldwyn Girls. Walter Mitty's heroic day-dreams on the screen are all high comedy, and excellent. But the essence of the funny idea is that they should be the compensations of a squidgy little man who could never achieve anything in real life. In the film, between his fantasies, Danny-Mitty gets mixed up with crooks, has farcical adventures; and here the picture takes what is, for me, the fatal one-way road into slapstick and repetitious knockings-down and smashings: high comedy and farce just don't mix. But two of the day-dreams—the take-off of the R.A.F. type, being a wizard type off duty, and the great surgeon of popular fiction at work, are ten minutes or so of sheer joy.

E. ARNOT ROBERTSON

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## BEETHOVEN AND JOHANN STRAUSS

There was one thing which Beethoven always wanted to know about performances of his works: "How were the tempi?"; everything else, says Schindler, seemed to him of secondary importance. And nowhere in symphonic literature is the choice of tempo more important than in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, above all in the first movement, which speaks a musical language of unprecedented range, directness and concentration. The task of the conductor here is to combine an impression of tempestuous ferocity with one of eternal, immutable order; the first depends largely on the choice of a tempo as rapid as is consistent with clarity and dignity, the second on a minimum of variation within the beat.

Beethoven's earliest notion for the speed was actually as fast as 108 or 120 crotchets to the minute; and though experience compelled him subsequently to recommend the more practical 88, that first vision survives as a guide to the essential nature of the music. Moreover, even 88 is a much faster speed than that of any leading modern conductor, with the possible exception of Toscanini. At last week's Albert Hall performance, I must admit that the more leisurely tempo of Dr. Furtwängler, and his greater readiness to slow up for rhetorical or sentimental reasons, seemed to me at variance with the tragic ferocity and sternness which underlie Beethoven's notes. In the rest of the symphony, however, conductor, B.B.C. chorus and Vienna Philharmonic made full amends; the Adagio was meltingly beautiful, and the vocal forces, topped by the *strahlende Sopran* of Mme Welitsch, were for once almost adequate to the superhuman demands of the finale. In all, it was a memorable performance, and a worthy culmination of the Beethoven cycle.

As in a Greek theatre, the sequence of heroic dramas was followed by a Satyric after-piece: an evening devoted to festivity, laughter and the dance. The Gothic Furtwängler made way for the jolly, circular Joseph Krips; Beethoven for Joseph and Johann Strauss. On paper, a whole evening devoted to dance music might have seemed too much; in practice, the audience was simply bewitched by the variety and richness of melodic invention, the elegance and resource of the workmanship, and the wayward rhythms and long-drawn-out sweetness of the Viennese performances. In *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, the march of time has strangely accentuated the nostalgia of those solo violins in thirds; it is no longer only a season or a landscape that they evoke, but a century and a civilisation.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

# Correspondence

## FRANCO AND COMMUNISM

SIR,—It is obvious that, in any forthcoming struggle, Spain, no less than these fortunate islands of ours, will provide a first-rate jumping-off ground for American bombers. This does not, however, justify Senator Gurney in talking twaddle about recent European history. He says that "Franco has been fighting Communism since 1936." Now, when General Franco, in July of that year, dishonouring his soldier's oath of allegiance, and putting into execution a long-prepared plan, placed himself at the head of the thousands of coffee-complexioned "crusaders"—the Crescent-and-Cross Berber champions of Catholicism—brought over from North Africa in Nazi warplanes, and marched on Madrid, it was a liberal government, just as constitutionally elected as our own, that he set out to destroy.

It is true, no doubt, that as the war dragged on its long and slaughterous course, and the Spanish Republicans realised that the Western democracies did not care a rap about their fate—refusing to sell them even defensive anti-aircraft weapons—and that Russia was their only friend, the insignificant group of Communists (in 1936 a mere thirty thousand or so out of a population of twenty-two million) gathered strength and eventually took control. But it is a downright falsification of history to say that it was Communism Franco attacked. With the powerful help of our Axis enemies, with his cut-throat Foreign Legionaries, and with his hordes of Moors (*affublés d'images du Sacré Cœur*, as M. Maritain said at the time) his aim was to stamp out liberalism in Spain, and all that liberalism implies—the freedom, in fact, which at one time was supposed to be prized by the compatriots of Senator Gurney.

HAROLD BINNS

21 East Avenue, Bournemouth.

## NAPOLEON AND MR. SHAW

SIR,—It is an unexpected compliment to be criticised by Mr. Shaw, even though, in his criticism, he sets up a stuffed dummy of his own devising and then knocks it down to everyone's satisfaction. Far from describing Napoleon as a nonentity, I wrote: "Napoleon is the supreme example of the human being who became more than lifesize." Of course Napoleon was a superb professional soldier; that does not alter the fact that keeping in his head the number and position of his forces was the wrong way of doing things and that the card-index is the right one. Any well-run office can now perform miracles of organisation which it once needed the genius of Napoleon to perform. Napoleon was much more than the professional soldier of Mr. Shaw's letter; he was also a politician of genius and a civil organiser of the first rank. At the same time, despite Mr. Shaw, he was "a vulgar liar and pretender, inventing bogus history for his own glorification." The version of Marengo, for instance, which he gave in his contemporary bulletins, was more favourable to himself than the actual events; the version taught in official histories under the Empire ten years later was more favourable than that in the bulletins; and the version in the Memoirs was an improvement even on the official histories. As to pretending that he had won the battle of Waterloo, Napoleon did not say that it was a defeat for the British people; he wrote of "the catastrophe that had befallen their army."

The real catastrophe was for the French people to have fallen into the hands of a genius. Without Napoleon there would have been no Napoleonic Empire; all the same, without Napoleon, France would probably have kept her natural frontiers and have remained the greatest Power in Europe. As it was, Napoleon started France on her way downhill. For my part, I find the historic truth in the Emperor of Turania rather than in the Man of Destiny.

I agree with Mr. Shaw that Napoleon was a magnificent professional soldier who knew his job. It is a pity Mr. Shaw does not appreciate that the professional historian knows his job also.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

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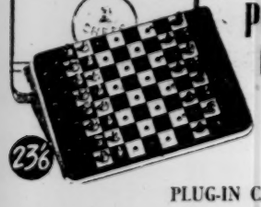
SIR,—To take up Mr. Bernard Shaw's two points:

1. When he settled the question of evolution in 1906, how did he explain (to take the simplest instance that occurs to me) the acquiring by swallows of the habit of building mud nests? I can see the first act in the play: the proto-swallow gets some mud in its beak and spits it out against a cliff. What happens next? In other words what causes the "infinitesimal increments from generation to generation" to go on occurring during a period in which they serve no purpose whatever? All evolutionists, of whatever school, ignore this little difficulty, but I should have thought it might worry one who is also a dramatist.

2. Mr. Shaw argues that Napoleon must have been a great man because he has a great reputation among those of his profession, and scolds Mr. Taylor for suggesting that he was a "vulgar liar and pretender." Why does not the same reasoning apply to Pasteur and Lister, whom Mr. Shaw ranks in the same way, in spite of their colossal and increasing professional reputations?

DENIS BROWNE

46 Harley Street, W.1.

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SIR,—Mr. A. J. P. Taylor's alleged feat is nothing compared to Mr. Bernard Shaw's, who has crammed more nonsense about military matters into one letter than would seem possible. I pass over such palpable absurdities as Wellington's "amateurism," the story that the Royal Artillery ran away, the *gaffe* about D'Erlon and Ney, and even the staggering "arrival" of the Prussians at Quatre Bras. I prefer to deal, if I may, with the question of Napoleon's professionalism.

Any theory that he was a formalist or a pedant at war can be exploded by the briefest inquiry. From what schoolbook, for instance, did he learn his system of "campaigning without magazines" (*i.e.* of freeing himself from his lines of supply)? The secret of Napoleon's success was never more accurately described than by Mr. Shaw himself in the stage direction in his "Man of Destiny"—*i.e.* expert logistics and concentrated artillery fire. Napoleon was too clear-headed to waste much time on tactics; that meretricious art, so fascinating to the real professionalists like the text-book writers, and to laymen, like Mr. Shaw. Its devilishly simple reduction by Napoleon to a cannonade, an infantry charge and a cavalry pursuit was still valid in 1945. Why, indeed, should he have abandoned a technique which had always been successful, and was nearly so at Waterloo? What he was waiting for on the morning of June 18th was, of course, the deployment of his artillery, delayed by the mud. If Napoleon really believed that not only must he wait for the ground to dry for his cavalry, but that he must delay his bombardment and infantry assault as well, while it did, then he must have been as great a booby as Mr. Shaw accuses Mr. Taylor of making him out to be.

It seems both rash and discourteous to tell a man of Mr. Shaw's age and eminence that he is talking rubbish, but as a professional and an artilleryman I feel I must try to protect the greatest of professional artillerymen even from his well-wishers. Napoleon's defence of himself is bad enough: his defence by Mr. Shaw makes him look ridiculous.

R. G. S. BIDWELL

17 Thurlow Road, London, N.W.3.

## THE ATOM BOMB

SIR,—It would not be proper to comment on the contents of Professor Blackett's book before it is published, but it is desirable to discuss some of the points made by Critic in his reference to it.

Critic suggests that Russia was asked to pin-point all her vital targets under conditions in which she would be unable to profit from similar knowledge of American targets, and that, in return for this advantage, the Baruch proposals gave no real guarantee that America would destroy its own atomic power when all the conditions had been fulfilled. Critic links the prior safeguards demanded by the Americans against *all* weapons of mass destruction with a discussion of the difficulty of controlling potential developments of bacteriological warfare and suggests that this was sufficient to justify Russian suspicion that the Americans would never destroy their atomic pile. Finally he suggests that vested interests in America justified Russia in refusing to accept the position of being in a permanent minority on the Atomic Authority which was to control all the manufacture and material for the peaceful use of atomic energy.

Without in any way minimising the historical justification for Russia's suspicion of the West, it is tragic that her representatives were not allowed to accept the Baruch proposals as a basis for discussion, since it is hard to believe that, given good will on all sides, difficulties such as those cited by Critic could not have been overcome in discussions on the Atomic Energy Commission. Instead, the Russians took up the position that international inspection and control were an infringement of national sovereignty and proposed a Convention, to outlaw atomic warfare, which could hardly inspire enthusiasm in those with any memory of the lack of confidence following the Convention renouncing gas warfare or the political sequel to the Briand-Kellogg Pact renouncing war as an instrument of policy; both of these treaties were signed by most, if not all, the nations involved in the last war. Furthermore, the Russians made it plain that the acceptance of their Convention would not be followed by their agreement to inspection and control of atomic activities. This negative attitude, coupled with insistence on the continuation of the Veto in atomic affairs, stultified all progress. With all their imperfections, including those of timing, it must be remembered that the Baruch proposals in their main principles were of a generosity unparalleled in the world's history; never before has a nation offered to forgo the advantages of an overwhelming new and secret weapon except under the compulsion of utter defeat and "unconditional surrender." Surely such a gesture should have compelled the attempted co-operation of even the most suspicious Oriental mind.

Bacteriological warfare so far is hardly in the same category as atomic destruction. The world has not been horrified by its proved efficacy; there is legitimate doubt as to its effectiveness and as to how far it can be controlled without exerting a boomerang effect on the user. Again, it differs from the atomic problem in that all civilised nations with reasonable laboratory accommodation have an equal chance in the bacteriological field; there should be no blackmail due to exclusive possession of the "know how." Given good will again, there seems no reason to suppose that the problem of controlling and inspecting bacteriological activities would have baffled an international commission similar to that which successfully solved the technical problems involved in the control of atomic energy. The history of the enforcement of sanitary conventions and the suppression of the drug traffic offer considerable encouragement. Most undesirable social activities appear uncontrollable until a determined and united effort is made.

The world awaits some evidence of genuine realistic co-operation from Russia. It may be that Mr. Vyshinsky's latest proposals in Paris foreshadow a genuine change of policy, and that his proposals for effective international control may prove on examination to be really effective and freed from the paralysing effect of the Veto. In view of Russia's expressed attitude during the last three years we must be excused if we await the details before indulging in premature rejoicing.

DOUGLAS MCCLEAN

South Mimms, Herts.

[Critic writes: "This puts the case admirably. My concern in a Diary Note was merely to call attention to the current misconception that the Soviet Union had no sane reason for rejecting the Baruch proposals. Russia's counter-proposals were futile; their answer should have been a constructive alternative."—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

## THE HIGHLANDS

SIR,—On one of my rare visits to England I chanced to meet Critic, just after reading his Highland Diary. He asked me if I had been annoyed by his remarks. I trust you will pardon me for saying that I found his observations not annoying (to vex is doubtless Critic's *métier*) but simply painful, like almost every article written by an Englishman on the subject of my country. Well-intentioned articles—and I do not doubt Critic's good intention—are the most painful of all. Truth hurts sometimes, half-truths always.

Critic's suggestion that the Highlands are so poor in natural resources, save their beauty, that their proper destiny is to become a National Park, a Scenic Playground for Cockneys, recalled to my mind another notorious publication, a hundred years ago. I refer to *Happy Memories*, by Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The Duchess of Sutherland of those days paid Mrs. Stowe a sum of money, exceeding (I like to think) thirty pieces of silver, in return for writing an apologia for the Clearances. Mrs. Stowe, whose description of the


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wrongs inflicted on American Negroes rent the hearts of our grandparents, accepted the commission. She wrote passionately of the beauty of the Highlands, remarking that they were "the more beautiful because they had been cleared of human beings and were now inhabited exclusively by sheep, stags and ptarmigan." She added that the Duchess had served the best interests of her crofters by forcing them to emigrate to America, where they would "enjoy a freer, ampler and more modern transatlantic life"—in companionship doubtless with the Negroes whose virtues Mrs. Stowe had extolled in her previous book. So far as I recollect, she did not mention that the sheep, ptarmigan and stags would enjoy an "ampler freedom" without the tiresome presence of human beings.

In brief, *Happy Memories* was an honest little piece (written with the best of intentions) of Left propaganda, although it was produced on the command of a Duchess. Critic's article, I am sure, owed nothing to aristocratic patronage but its effect on the nostrils is the same. It appears to accept as established that the Highlands have no natural resources to maintain human life, except beauty and sport. This is not the case. A famous Glen where my grandfather lived provided 102 men to fight for the English against Napoleon at Waterloo. The same Glen produced 51 men to fight for the English against the Russians in the Crimea. In the war of 1914 two men who fought for Critic and me came from that Glen. In the Second World War not a single man from that Glen fought for anybody. Yet the 155 men who once lived there were tall, strong and noble in character and appearance. Such men were not the product of sport and beauty, but of oatmeal, salmon, trout, venison, butter, milk, cream, whisky, and (if I dare so express myself) the Grace of God. In fine, the Highlands are quite capable of producing men, women and children without the benefits of hydro-electric plans, tourist bureaux or capitalist investment.

Whether they will continue to produce them, I do not know. What I do know is that if Critic and people of his kidney allowed them to produce goods for their own consumption, and not exclusively for export, the Highlands could ejoy conditions approaching self-sufficiency, as they did for over 2,000 years.

I write from Paris, this noble and civilised city, where so many of my Celtic compatriots have found welcome, a livelihood and sometimes, in the end, a grave. In a street not far from where I live died Gentle Lochiel—one of the many who fled from the British Isles after the Jacobite Rising of 1745. May I dare, in your Whiggish columns, to assert that if that Rising had been successful, we should have had a United Kingdom very different from, and much more agreeable than, that which we know? We should have lived in amity with the Irish. We should almost certainly not have lost our American colonies, and we might even have escaped the Industrial Revolution. Moreover, Scotland would have been able to survive as a political, not merely a geographic, entity. Certainly? Perhaps not. That would have depended on the Scots; and, contrary to general belief, we are an extremely unpredictable people.

I am addressing this letter to you in French because I doubt whether many of your readers understand Gaelic—the language of my ancestors. And, though I can acquit myself fairly fluently in English, it gives me physical distress to do so. MORAY MCLAREN

[We apologise to Mr. McLaren for translating his letter into what we fear he will regard as distressing English.—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

## SOVIET TACTICS AND SOCIALISM

SIR,—Why all this fuss in your columns about world revolution? No instructed person is ignorant that Marxists (and therefore the Soviet leaders) believe in the overthrow of capitalism by the workers of the world. No one is surprised that capitalists (and therefore the American Government and the Tory party) object to that proceeding. The anomalous thing is that Socialists should object. This only shows how Social Democracy has degenerated in the last fifty years. It would be funny if it were not tragic.

When I became a Socialist in my teens, world revolution was a commonplace of the Socialist movement. We used to sing Bruce Glasier's "When the revolution comes" and Jim Connell's "The people's flag is deepest red." Some of us (more in America than here) used to sign our letters "Yours for the revolution." All this did not prevent us calling ourselves Social Democrats. For in those days Social Democracy meant what it had meant to Bronterre O'Brien (author of the phrase) namely, a democracy that was social, not merely political. To-day it seems to mean a Socialism that takes care to do nothing without the parliamentary forms evolved in capitalist States, It is a change of emphasis which amounts to a change of meaning.

Fabianism, which wrought the change, did the cause of Socialism both a service and a disservice. In forcing Socialists to master the machinery of administration, it did good. But in inducing the belief that capitalism could be converted into Socialism by constitutional means alone and without a revolutionary class struggle, Fabianism did untold evil. It left the movement helpless against the catastrophe of world war, twice repeated in our generation; and we now see the saddening spectacle of Fabians lending their active support to war preparations on the side of capitalist America against those Governments which (whatever their mistakes) at least spring from and work for the global class struggle of toilers against exploiters.

Precisely because Marxists believe in world revolution, they do *not* believe in world war, which is the surest way of sabotaging revolution. That is the answer to Mr. George Dallas and his kind. If we had had in Britain the sort of Government for which we voted in 1945—a real Socialist Government—we should have lined up with world Socialism and not with world capitalism. We should have met the American blackmail of terminating Lease-Lend by promptly telling Truman to take over our military responsibilities in Europe and the Middle East. (If there weren't enough G.I.s, there would have been the Red Army to take over!) We should have concluded trade agreements with the Socialist Governments of the world, rebuilt our economy on that basis, and *dared* Truman to atom-bomb London in retaliation. He wouldn't have dared. There was then just enough decency, even in America, to stop that.

As it is, our Labour leaders have sold out to Wall Street, and it looks as if only the French working class, and those of our own who may yet catch something of their genuine Jacobin spirit, now stand between civilisation and hell.

Oxford. ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

## A MINOR POWER?

SIR,—In your London Diary of October 9, you observed that "in this country and in several other of the smaller democracies the attempt [to discover and to state the 'complex, unpalatable and often subversive truth'] is still being made." What is the significance of the use of the word "other"? The democracy of the United Kingdom is smaller than that of the United States; but, surely, in the range of democratic countries Britain still approximates more in size to the United States than to Norway, Switzerland and Luxembourg. It is to be hoped that the word "other" was a slip of the pen, for if it were used deliberately one could only conclude that Critic had become the most minuscule of all little Englanders. RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL

[Critic writes: "The word 'smaller' is comparative. Britain is still an important Power, for all its dollar dependence on the U.S., but since it is not in the same category as the U.S. or U.S.S.R., it is rightly to be classed as the greatest of the smaller democracies."—ED., *N. S. & N.*]


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# BOOKS IN GENERAL

"Poor old Meredith," Henry James is reported to have said. "He writes these mysterious nonsenses and heaven alone knows what they all mean."

"Poor old James," said Meredith. "He sets down on paper these mysterious rumblings of his bowels—but who can be expected to understand them."

The rumblings are still audible, are indeed revived; the mysterious nonsenses are dead. Why should the great unutterable be on the crest at the moment and the great incomprehensible in the trough?

I have been reading Mr. Siegfried Sassoon's new *Life** of Meredith, and three or four of the novels as well, to see what the reason is. There are a dozen reasons. What James said at length to Edith Wharton—that the central weakness of Meredith's art was unconscious insincerity; that he was a sentimental rhetorician "whose natural indolence or congenital insufficiency, or both, made him in life, as in art, shirk every climax, dodge around it and veil its absence in a fog of eloquence," has a fatal truth in it; even though James was later on to modify his words with: "He did the best things best." Meredith is high feeding. To read him is to live on a continual diet of lobster; a kind of brain fever follows and there is the sensation of having broken out in an altogether too spectacular rash. Halfway through *The Egoist* or *Harry Richmond*, through *Evan Harrington* or *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* one has had a surfeit. Yet we do get halfway, we shall certainly hanker and try again. Whatever Henry James may say, we have been confronted by genius; or at least by one of those complex calamities of genius (comparable with the disaster of Carlyle) which the English nineteenth century occasionally provides.

If Meredith was indolent, he now has an indolent apologist in Mr. Sassoon. His book is charming but thin; it is disarmingly modest, almost amateur; an invitation to look affectionately at the ruin, guide book in hand. In one respect, his forbearing manner is not a bad attitude. Meredith is a young man's novelist, brimming with our earliest, sun-dazed feelings, before experience has taught us that the heart is a gaoler; he is bursting with a young man's feeling for the exaggerated and fantastic. Our judgments when we are young are wrecked by our natural energy; all Meredith's characters spring out of such a recklessly youthful view of life. They run like fire and burn us into acquiescence. It is therefore good to be tolerant. But Meredith's view of life cannot impose itself for long—as we were to find later on in the novels of D. H. Lawrence who was greatly influenced by Meredith. It collides with reality and if too much pride and brain are persistently behind it the effect of the collision will be grotesque.

There are three or four lines in *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* which caught my eye when I turned from Mr. Sassoon:

> Well! All wisdom is mournful. Tis, therefore, coz, that the wise do love the Comic Muse. Their own high food would kill them. You shall find great poets, rare philosophers, night after night on the broad grin before a row of yellow lights and mouthing masks. Why? Because all's dark at home.

Forget the horrible Stratford-on-Avonisms of the writing (a vulgarity which, after all, had tainted Browning and Carlyle), and repeat the last sulky, self-pitying phrase. Peacock's daughter had left him when he wrote it, but "all was dark at home" in Meredith's life long before that and long after. If a man can dress like a gentleman—and that is or was an elusive art—and pass as a gentleman, why is he not a gentleman? The question had been acute in the Meredith tailoring family for two generations: the deep romanticism of English snobbery, the quality that has made it fruitful, had dilated the fancy of the Merediths. The grandfather, old Mel of *Evan Harrington*, had carried it off: Meredith's father was crippled financially by the old man's sallies into greatness, and himself seems to have been muddled by the question; in Meredith, who was an only child and who grew up without a mother, the snobbery reappeared in its highest incarnation, as the love of the rare and hyperbolical and the refusal of common reality. It is a weakness of Mr. Sassoon's book that its light irony skimps the solitude, the intensity, the terrifying will of Meredith's dreaming childhood, where this notion was born.

When our minds go to Hawthorne's proud solitude in New England, we see the danger of Meredith's case: there was no morbidity in Meredith's loneliness and romance. The success of the family had made him an optimist. How vastly he would have been improved as a novelist—we suspect—if there had been a worm in the bud; if his romantic dreams of heredity had had, like Hawthorne's, a conviction of tainted blood and a curse upon the family. Meredith's were too sanguine and wilful. We are frightened by the child who suddenly finds the knowledge of superiority overwhelming, who briskly takes his education into his own hands and goes off to Germany under his own steam. There could have been no worse choice for one who claimed (as the Celts so often do) to be Celtic. The misty, congested air of German fancy, over-packed with grotesque and kept in order by puritanic discipline, was a fatal intellectual beginning: it was too congenial, the choice of the spoiled boy.

It is now fashionable to speak with horror of snobbery and once or twice, in these columns, Mr. Raymond Mortimer has warned us that it is becoming the repressed subject of this century as sex was of the last. Most of the Victorian novelists attempted the subject, of course, and are to be respected for doing so; but they hardly did more than make feints at it from a confused ethical and political point of view. Meredith, in my opinion, is the only novelist really to make something of this crucial English theme. There is not—I agree with Mr. Sassoon—any evidence that he was extraordinarily snobbish in his life; he may have tried to hide from one or two people that he was the son of a tailor and dogged by the ridiculous shears, but he freely told his friends and behaved with the usual good-humoured middle class resolution in the ordinary social dilemmas that arose in Victorian life. It is very common for men of genius to pretend to high birth, and it is pretty clear from Meredith's novels that he considered the elevation of their spirit gave them a right to do so. What is clearer is that Meredith perfectly understood the consequences and (though with some confusion) fully presented them.

Coldness of heart, egoism, artificiality, self-sufficiency and meanness—the characteristics we see more icily presented in Julien Sorel and Lucien Leuwen—are the price to be paid for the assumption of the richly imagined role. The accomplished snob must be impenetrable. Evan Harrington is openly warned of this; in Sir Willoughby Patterne we see what it is all going to lead to. The young snob, the secret prince and dreamer, lost in the glitter of his dream of honour and his own talent, is in danger of becoming an actor for life and, in any crisis, his lost sense of reality will make him evasive, lonely and without mercy. Insincerity, an emotional over-dressing will haunt every rhapsodic sense of the better, the enchanted thing. But what Meredith could discern in his characters had been taken out of the confusion of his own mind. His novels are a chaotic display, the grotesque if often noble ruins, of a knowledge he could not formulate. Perhaps no English writer could do so and ought not to try; and yet, though this romantic snobbery was a matter that happened to boil up high in the nineteenth century for political reasons and for the same is being pushed off the boil to-day, it is still a preoccupation which goes to the roots of our character. It is the mysterious substance that interposes between ourselves and reality; in the English novel it is behind two centuries of inspired exaggeration and ironical sociability. It is the thing that cuts us off from the French and Russian novelists.

Mr. Sassoon believes that the three-volume novel was the ruin of Meredith. That convention may have led a careless technician to throw his plots together and rely on brilliant presentability to fill the gaps. But we cannot have the virtues of a writer without his vices: the fact is that Meredith's virtues are all in his personal mobility, his aplomb and his presumpion. His stories do not progress; they are waltzed with violence from line to line, and chapter to chapter. The characters are inseparable from himself. He has to have us by the arm, propelling us with non-stop talking to his scene, unwilling for us to see it with any eye but his. The unremitting footwork of Meredith may give us the first chapters of *Richard Feverel*, may take us to that comical scene in the solicitor's office where young Ripton is caught reading a book about Woman under his desk. Or to the wonderful set portrait of Adrian "the wise youth" who "caused himself to be required by people who could serve him"; to the death of Old Mel, the unveiling of Sir Willoughby, or to one of those artificial scenes—excellent devices and a development from Fielding—like the temptation of Sir Austin. The staginess of Meredith is in the eighteenth-century tradition and is an effective method of linking the main action by witty discursions before the curtain. But the same method perverts narrative. It is a kind of snobbery raised to the *n*th, that hopes to pass off a plain sight of gambling at the table as everything except what it is:

> He compared the creatures dabbling over the board to summer flies on butcher's meat, periodically scared by a cloth. More in the abstract they were snatching at a snapdragon bowl. It struck him that the gamblers had thronged in on an invitation to drink the round of seed time and harvest in a gulp. Again they were desperate gleaners, hopping, skipping, bleeding, amid a whiz of scythe blades, for small wisps of booty. Nor was it long before the presidency of an ancient hoary Goat-Satan might be perceived, with skew-eyes and mouth, nursing a hoof on a tree.

A snobbery, or poetry curdled and gone wrong. There is too much labour in that passage for good poetry; there is too much exhibitionism in it for it to be tolerable prose.

"All is dark at home": the comic writers are slain poets. Meredith is our most foreign novelist, and in some ways this foreignness brings him near to us to-day. He is pagan, too. He has the aptitude for a provoking generalisation. He has reacted to science. He has a gambling intellect. He saw, better than his more sensible contemporaries, some of the outlines of our world. No doubt, the poetic approach can be called a new form of the Old Victorian humbug, but it enabled him to sharpen his psychological eye: Richard Feverel's seduction after the champagne dinner is a vulgar piece of writing but at least it is true to life in the essentials. The notion that Sir Austin Feverel's System was a means of unconscious revenge is as rare a perception as anything in Henry James. And *Modern Love* is not only one of the finest sonnet sequences of the language: it is also a recognisable, an unabashed and almost contemporary *Huis Clos*. Meredith appears, in England, at the first break of the intellectual with society, and that in itself brings him closer to us. Just as Thackeray held that he was born several generations too late, perhaps Meredith's difficulty was that he was born at least two generations too soon, and so, like Thackeray, he ends by satisfying nobody. That air of experience is specious because it is heartless: that thumping sense of the world, is too thumping: he has gone to the intellect and its pride to seal off the wounds of life, as a young man will before he learns that the brain will do nothing for us. That last sight of Meredith, so often reported, of an old man with a loud voice shut off by deafness from his friends, muttering his fantastications, bitter and still straining for more brillance in a final defiance of reality, is a parting allegory.

V. S. Pritchett

*Meredith. By Siegfried Sassoon. *Constable.* 15s*

## THE ATOM

**Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy.** By P. M. S. BLACKETT. *Turnstile Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Brave heresy and astounding orthodoxy—keen insight, originality and willingness to question the accepted axioms of our time, combined with acceptance of some ancient fallacies—these are the major ingredients of a work which deserves the careful study of any thinking citizen of this troubled world. Except for the last short chapter Mr. Blackett's study is devoted to a brilliant analysis of the problem posed by the great discovery of our time. The concluding four pages contain the author's prescription for "A Way Out."

The analysis contains not only a careful scientific evaluation of the significance of atomic energy in terms of its effect upon politics and upon war as "the extension of politics by other means"; it also comprises some long-overdue debunking of the dangerous clichés which have gained wide acceptance since Hiroshima. In the opinion of this reviewer, the debunking of post-Hiroshima mythology constitutes the greatest contribution made by the author.

There will be much eyebrow-raising in London and no little resentful repercussion in Washington as favourite fetish after fetish receives the rapier-thrust of penetrating iconoclasm. The believers in "Victory through Airpower" will find their thesis challenged with an impressive array of carefully authenticated facts. Those neo-Douhets and neo-Seversky who dream of easy victory over the Soviet Union by dropping a few atomic bombs on Russian cities, will find themselves faced with the necessity for meeting fact and close reasoning with something more than complacent armchair strategy. Above all, almost all of us citizens of the "West" will find ourselves rudely shaken out of the smug belief that the proposals we have made for the international control of atomic energy were "an incredibly generous offer" which the Russians were either too stupid or too nasty to accept.

Without identifying himself with the Soviet point of view on atomic control, Professor Blackett points out two glaring fallacies in the Western approach. The first error resides in the attempt to deal with the control of atomic weapons without at the same time dealing with other methods of mass destruction, particularly with biological warfare. This, in turn, leads to a re-examination of the value of attempting to discover *any* method of complete control short of universal disarmament and the establishment of a world government. The second major fallacy, which the author finds inherent in the Western approach, is the failure on the part of the West to take sufficiently into account that control of atomic energy means not only the control of atomic weapons but also the control of the development of energy for peaceful purposes.

Perhaps the most interesting section is that in which the author compares the relative positions of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in respect to existing facilities and resources for generating power. Whereas 96 per cent of the energy used in the United States is derived from its great resources in coal, petroleum, natural gas and water power, a large part of the energy consumed in the U.S.S.R. and many other countries is still derived from human and animal exertion. In India the figure runs as high as 70 per cent. This comparison sheds new light upon the point of view of the Russians, for whom the rapid development of new sources of energy is essential, and therefore not to be inhibited by any sort of external interference—least of all by a scheme of allocation based upon strategic considerations rather than upon need. It also illuminates the premise which underlies most American thought at the present time; namely, that it is better, at least for the present, to forgo the peace-time benefits of atomic energy development in order to obtain security against atomic weapons. In highlighting the basic discrepancy between the thinking of the super-energised U.S. and the under-energised U.S.S.R., the author condemns neither the one nor the other, but brings into the open a major source of disagreement which has too long been obscured by irrelevant propaganda.

A section of the work, which will doubtless cause considerable controversy, is that in which the author puts forward the assertion that the two bombs were dropped upon Japan in August 1945 not "to shorten the war and save lives," but to achieve a diplomatic objective in the post-war world—namely, ascendancy of the U.S. over the U.S.S.R. by reason of a more or less single-handed victory over Japan. It would be interesting to have the comment of Mr. Henry Stimson upon the reasoning with which this assertion is supported. Without all the data which have recently become available and which the author ably uses to support his conviction, this reviewer voiced a similar suspicion in a book written not quite a year ago.

It is impossible in a short review to do justice to a book so closely packed with acute reasoning and original thought. One other feature, however, deserves at least brief mention. Opinions vary widely as to that basic element in the U.N. Charter which makes the U.N. helpless in the absence of unanimity among the great Powers. There are many who believe that the veto should be abolished or at least drastically modified. For anyone who inclines toward this belief it will be useful to study carefully the author's argument that the abolition of the veto would open the road to legalising a third World War.

The work is disappointing to this reviewer only in the sterility of the conclusions drawn from so fertile an analysis. Having punctured so many balloons which needed puncturing, the author sees "The Way Out" in a sort of horse-trading approach to limited disarmament, applying this method to all weapons of mass destruction and to the means of delivering them. Undoubtedly—if limited disarmament is accepted as the goal—this suggestion represents a more realistic approach than that of the Atomic Energy Commission.

But are we to accept limited disarmament as the goal? Is not the idea of peace through partial disarmament—or even through complete disarmament so long as there is no higher sovereignty than the nation-state—one of the most dangerous of all fallacies? Did not Hitler prove that disarmament, in the absence of a supra-national authority, means merely the disarmament of those nations which are satisfied with the *status quo*—and a golden chance for those who are not?

Mr. Blackett's penetrating study seems to this reviewer to lead to one inescapable conclusion. The world has become one. It is going to have one government. The political recognition of existing unity will come about either through war and conquest, or by peaceful means. Those of us, who have no wish to live in a world first reduced to rubble and then dominated by either the U.S.S.R. or the U.S., must therefore face the single outstanding fact of our time—that there can be no disarmament and no reasonable hope of peace unless and until there is world government. Not at some date in the dim future, but within that short space of time which remains to us before the competitive search for national security leads to disaster.

The author's failure to come to this conclusion—his apparent satisfaction with limited disarmament and better power politics as the goal of Western policy—makes for what was called at the outset a strange mixture of heresy and orthodoxy. Nevertheless, the work may well become a milestone in post-Hiroshima thinking—if only because it strips off so much of the mumbo-jumbo and reveals the problem of atomic energy in its true relation to the current death struggle of anarchic nationalism.

JAMES P. WARBURG

[The author of this review was Deputy-Director of the U.S. Office of War Information during the second world war.—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

## DETECTION AND THRILLERS

**The House of Godwinsson.** By E. R. PUNSHON. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Green Shiver.** By CLYDE B. CLASON. *Heinemann.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**The Test Match Murder.** By ALFRED TACK. *Herbert Jenkins.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Run to Death.** By PATRICK QUENTIN. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Bullets for the Bridegroom.** By DAVID DODGE. *Michael Joseph.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Death Takes Small Bites.** By GEORGE H. JOHNSTON. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Tremolo.** By ERNEST BORNEMAN. *Jarrolds.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

**Dear Conspirator.** By GEORGE GOODCHILD. *Ward, Lock.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The dividing line between thrillers and detection is being steadily obscured by the shuffling of authors who try to have a foot in both camps. This must be very gratifying to those booksellers, library assistants and publishers who have fought tooth and nail to prevent the public exercising any discrimination in the matter. Their assumption has always been that anyone who, from his low state of health or other infirmity, feels the need of a detective story might just as well read a thriller—so why bother to differentiate. For medicinal purposes a thriller is the equivalent of a detective story: therefore it is a detective story. And here comes Mr. Gollancz (always a bold pioneer) to say so in so many words. On the spine of the dust jacket *The House of Godwinsson* is described as a thriller, and on the face of the dust jacket as a detective story. It is high time to protest.

One must admit that many readers gallop through their detective stories with as little mental application as they devote to a thriller. In fact, they frequently begin with a glance at the last page in order to spare themselves any effort of thought and to swindle the poor author. But that very act illustrates the essential difference between the two. No one bothers to anticipate the end of a thriller by turning to the last chapter because no one's mental processes are in danger of stimulation. A thriller relies for its effect on evoking an emotional state of suspense and anticipation: a detective story provides a problem on which the reader can, if he likes, exercise his mind. Of course, detection can borrow a few thrills, and be none the worse for that. While a thriller, as part of the mechanism of suspense, commonly shrouds the identity of the head villain in mystery, and keeps the reader guessing to the last: but guesswork is not detection. In spite of authors' attempts to produce hybrids, a reviewer can still tell the two species apart. So I shall now try to emulate the unruffled demeanour of a Japanese sexing day-old chickens, and proceed to do so.

To begin with, Mr. Punshon must be exonerated. *The House of Godwinsson* is as plain-sailing detection as any of the previous 24 Bobby Owens. The only rudiment of a thrill is when Bobby comes across a den of vice lined with erotic pictures. But, as not one single corroborative detail is supplied, our eager anticipation retires crestfallen. This is not one of Mr. Punshon's over-complicated plots, I'm glad to say. A man is found murdered in the East End of London. All you have to do is to identify him. The simple problem offers a golden opportunity to solve a Punshon for once off your own bat.

*Green Shiver* is the name given by the Chinese to a certain priceless jade necklace. The theft of the necklace from its Californian owner is responsible for two murders. Mr. Clason is happier with his gaudy trimmings than with the sober mechanism of a plot. In this case he takes time off from detection with a disquisition on jade, an account of the bombing of Tientsin by the Japanese Air Force, and a love affair between an Irishman with red hair and a girl with amnesia. No reader will be blamed for failing to find the solution, since the villain's alibi can

be broken only by an unwarrantable interpretation of Chinese habits.

Mr. Tack's detective efforts are improving. *The Test Match Murder* has a better plot than any of his previous works, and, now that he has dropped his pseudo-American jargon, the style no longer sets one's teeth on edge. A cricketer is shot while the English team is practising at a country house. There is a deceptive ease about the author's run up to the crease. Readers will do well to keep their eye on the ball, if they hope to avoid being bowled out by the googly he has in store for them.

*Run to Death*, though entitled a detective story, turns out the most egregious thriller, starting with an exotic striptease for Peter Duluth in the jungles of Yucatan. The striptease ends badly with the young lady's demise; but another young woman quickly steps up to join Peter careering round Mexico. Scene-shifting does not make a play. There is no excuse for a thriller without genuine excitement. And, to make matters worse, Patrick Quentin gets so tangled up in his plot that even the final explanation does not hold water.

*Bullets for the Bridegroom* is an up-to-date Wild West thriller. Instead of the posse on the heels of the bad hombres, we meet the Federal Agents tracking down a Nazi wireless transmitter. The hunt ends in the approved style with a grand shooting-match, where all the bullets find the right billets. Mr. Dodge writes with the gusto such a plot requires to carry conviction.

*Death Takes Small Bites* at an American newspaperman and a red-haired nurse travelling together on the old Burma Road, when they tumble into an unholy mix-up with Chinese bandits. The characters are crude and the sentiment trite. But the Yunnan scenery is magnificent; and the couple go through such a hell of a time that you cannot put the book down until you discover what those bandits are about. Why such a romantic thriller should be labelled "an unusual detective story" only Mr. Gollancz can say.

That label could be accurately applied to *Tremolo*, whose publishers prefer to call it "a mystery." The unusual feature about *Tremolo* is that it is not a case of murder, but the inexplicable transposition and disappearance of material objects that we have to investigate. Is it due to poltergeists? To ghosts? To madness? Or just to someone's wickedness? The place where these baffling phenomena occur is the home of a very ordinary American businessman, whose only peculiarity is an enthusiasm for jazz music. The jig-saw of evidence is cut up into such cunning shapes that the reader can hardly fail to build up the wrong picture. I confess that I was unable to appreciate the technical details of clarinet-playing, which figure largely in the book. But if Mr. Borneman plays that instrument as smoothly as he handles detection, he must be a notable musician.

The virtue of a thriller is that it should grip the attention. So I must not leave out *Dear Conspirator*, in which a nest of criminals meets its fate in the idyllic atmosphere of South Devon; it has the tiny, sticky grip of a four-year-old child, asking to be helped across a road.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

## THE EARLY GIDE

**Strait is the Gate.** By ANDRÉ GIDE. Translated by DOROTHY BUSSY. *Secker and Warburg.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

18 October, 1908. ". . . J'achève La Porte Etroite le 15—, et le 16 rase mes moustaches." For Gide, earlier in most things than his contemporaries, the Edwardian age had ended. It is no denigration of a novel to place it firmly in its context of time and place, and here it is helpful to reflect that *La Porte Etroite* is a romantic novel of the early nineteen-hundreds. This helps at least to explain its obvious faults, even if its equally obvious virtues are more specifically the virtues displayed by this writer at all the many periods of his long creative life. Five years later the new, the clean-shaven Gide writes that he has re-read this early novel. "Chaque fois que je reprends ce livre, c'est avec une émotion indicible; mais si les dialogues, les lettres et le journal d'Alissa m'en paraissent excellents—aussi réussis que possible—par contre les morceaux de rejointoiement ne sont pas exempts de préciosité." A critic need do little more than enlarge on the judgment of this most self-critical of writers.

Then, as at many other periods, Gide's not unnatural preoccupation was with divine and human love. In *La Porte Etroite* he has attempted to present the conflict between them with the greatest possible simplicity, the minimum of elaboration. From childhood Jerome and Alissa are in love. But Alissa has, to put it most unkindly, aspirations to sanctity. Say rather that, like many uncanonised saints, she is determined to sacrifice every high value to her conception of the highest. Until the last few terrible pages of the book we suffer with Jerome the impotent anguish of his rejection: we observe from the outside the crude and relentless progress of Alissa's sanctity. But in the famous journal of Alissa, with which Gide so boldly and triumphantly concluded his tragedy, we discover suddenly a soul in no less torment than Jerome's, a simple martyr rather than a deliberate saint. We even discover that at one late point Alissa would have surrendered to Jerome's importunity if he had maintained it a moment longer. As it is, she dies in the full unsanctity of her conflict, in the full *uncertainty* of a choice which was never wholly made. Such, crudely, is the issue, and such the story, and clearly there is nothing specifically Edwardian or romantic about either. Indeed, if one were instantly to envisage a medium for presenting both issue and story, one would plump, I believe, for the classical French drama of the seventeenth century. One would choose the same medium after reading the book, for, in so far as it fails, the failure lies in the chosen medium.

Much is explained by the curious word "rejointoiement" which Gide has coined. His high theme is fully expressed in a succession of high passages: they are magnificent and they are explicit. But the intermediate passages, indeed the whole highly flavoured atmosphere of the book, the whole carefully constructed framework, appear to be not only superfluous, not only "pas exempts de préciosité," but a total error. What could be worse, for example, than the tailpiece which Gide has so wantonly tacked on, the little virtuoso coda played by Jerome after the terrible finale of the journal. One sees only too well that it was necessary *for the novel*, this visit of Jerome to Alissa's married sister Juliette, the pangs he feels to see Alissa's old furniture in this depressing establishment, the sharper pang when he learns that Juliette's daughter is called . . . Alissa. One sees the motive which led Gide to call the scene of his drama Fongueusemare, and to clothe the whole narrative in the conventional romantic atmosphere which the name so resolutely implies. But all these things are the fault of the medium, of the novel as it was practised in that time, at that place. The literary form which Fromentin could use with such a deft perfection had lost its innocence by the turn of the century.

And yet, so intense and single-minded is Gide's vision, the issue itself is remarkably unclouded by the dubious method of its presentation. The great effect is made, and made to endure. In retrospect, it is the "rejointoiement" which falls


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PHILIP TOYNBEE

## THREE WISE MEN ON THE EAST

**Go East, Old Man.** By VERNON BARTLETT. *Latimer House.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

**News from the East.** By BERNARD NEWMAN. *Gollancz.* 18*s.*

**The Revolt of Asia.** By ROBERT PAYNE. *Gollancz.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

To enjoy *Go East, Old Man*, you should decide to go east too. Read Vernon Bartlett's day-by-day diary and don't worry if you come across all kinds of trivial details. Every day cannot be a D-day. And one advantage of reading someone else's diary is that you yourself can skip over the injections for cholera, smallpox, typhoid and all the rest of it. You need pay no courtesy visits to V.I.P.s, nor speak to revolting fellow-passengers. You can avoid the fussy old lady in Johannesburg who always eats a large steak for her breakfast, and, indeed, all the odd polite visits to gold mines and cattle fairs, if what you really want to do is to look at Buddhist sculpture in Ceylon or go bird-watching in Malaya. But before anchoring outside Singapore, you should share Vernon Bartlett's passing glance at the lives of the Natives in South Africa and wander with him and the Prime Minister of Ceylon through the Government offices at Colombo.

It is when Vernon Bartlett touches Chinese soil that we recognise the subtle combination of politician and reporter which made him a popular broadcaster. When he sees the bougainvillea in bloom in Hong Kong, he recalls that it was just there, in Stanley camp, that many of his friends were interned by the Japanese. And the venerable Chinese gentleman is not just a picturesque old man but Marshal Li Chai-sum, a severe critic of Chiang Kai-shek, recently expelled from the Kuomintang. In Nanking he visited and was visited by many high-ranking Government officials whose politeness and charm did not completely hide their embarrassment when they repeated the old, old story that the Communists were a mixture of gangster and tyrant. They reminded him of some of the men round General Franco who used to tell him privately what seemed to him to be perfectly reasonable and who acted in a way that seemed equally suicidal. Yet in spite of the civil war and the inflation and many other problems besides, Vernon Bartlett was sorry to leave China. In the "noisiest, dirtiest, smelliest Chinese street" he found "some of that tolerance, good humour and sense of proportion that are characteristic of great civilisations."

From China, he went to Japan where ubiquitous American officials escorted him round their adopted country, and, finally, into the presence of the Great White Chief himself. Lunch was a well-conducted dialogue, or, rather, a monologue interrupted occasionally when "hunger and politeness demanded that he (General MacArthur) should stop his own flow of language by putting food into his mouth. So, as the General raised his fork, Mrs. MacArthur came into action. . . . With great amiability and great speed, she talked of this and that until she seemed to receive some mysterious signal from her husband. Then she stopped short, almost in the middle of a sentence. "I think perhaps we should listen to the General," she said, and the Supreme Commander . . . resumed his assurance that the Japanese just love being conquered.

This and many other incidents give a personal impression of a country which has been largely hidden behind an American curtain since the war. Vernon Bartlett brings you home again, describing many of the small details which he thinks will interest the fireside traveller had he been in his shoes. He wrote the book, he tells us, because he wanted to share his impressions and experiences. He might have added that he wanted to create nostalgia in the minds of those who had travelled too.

Bernard Newman covers all the ground in Asia that is covered in *Go East, Old Man* and it also contains a much larger proportion of serious comment. His was not a leisurely tour in a ship; he flew in the fastest plane from city to city and then took a bicycle or a buffalo and looked at everything and talked to everybody who appeared on his horizon. He covered 30,000 miles, collected as many impressions and reports them with great gusto. He is clearly a skilful interviewer who can drag from Prime Ministers their secrets and from the ordinary man in jungle or in factory their views on the past, the present and the future. He has an open mind and a fluent pen. He is as much at home "coaxing stories" out of a fourteen-year-old Chinese prostitute in a dingy brothel in Singapore as he is in Field-Marshal Pibul's house in Bangkok discussing the best kind of Government for Siam. He has a nose for incident. When he strolled over Chick's Bridge on the frontier between Hong Kong and China, rice-smugglers conveniently turned up and after some hot shooting, escaped across the river. His jeep had a puncture in the dacoit-infested area in the Burmese jungle and he found himself staring at very close quarters into the face of an elephant. He went round in a patrol car in Calcutta at the height of the communal disturbances. Everywhere he saw the "seamy" side of life and his agitated, nervy reporting provides a picture of Asia which will surprise many readers who think of this continent as silent and leisurely. Both descriptions are true.

Bernard Newman also takes us behind the American curtain in Japan. He visited Hiroshima and found much to his surprise that every square yard in the very heart of that atomised city now bore a good crop of corn or vegetables. He gossiped with the people and found they bore no malice against us for using the atom bomb; they only regretted that they did not think of it first. His chapter on Japan is full of interesting personal details. He cycled here and he cycled there and reports Japanese views on marriage, war, education, the Americans, the British, the Russians and, of course, the geisha girls.

So many people and places and customs excited this enthusiastic traveller that they can't find room in Bernard Newman's chapters. And he adopts the practice of adding postcripts which he calls "snippets, hotchpotch, items, jottings and brevities." They are sometimes jargon and sometimes flashes of useful information. But taken as a whole, *News from the East* is an interesting travel book about places which appear more and more in the headlines, and for this reason it has lively topicality.

*The Revolt of Asia* is not a book of travel. Its author, Robert Payne, lived in China and elsewhere in Asia and became absorbed in its people and traditions. All the details of scenery and customs which excite the traveller are taken for granted and the author who is a poet and a distinguished novelist, writes imaginatively about the struggle for independence in Indonesia, India, China, Korea, Indo-China and the Philippines. In most cases he has an intimate personal knowledge of the political leaders. Through their eyes he sees and interprets for us the nationalist movements in Asia which matured during Japanese occupation. He describes them in their early days when colonial powers refused


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to recognise their meaning and to meet their demands. It was easier to be optimistic in 1946 when Robert Payne wrote this book and some of his political forecasts now read like a romantic picture of the future. But although he should have foreseen the stupidity of the French in Indo-China and of the Dutch in Indonesia, he could not have foretold the violence of Communist policy which has resulted and which is more likely to lead to anarchy than to the rational development he describes in his last chapter. Yet his book is the only imaginative, sensitive, and sympathetic history yet written of the wave of nationalism which is sweeping through the Far East to-day. Whilst Vernon Bartlett and Bernard Newman stimulate the traveller and the would-be visitor to Asia, Robert Payne tells us what the people want and what their leaders will never cease to demand. DOROTHY WOODMAN

## THE MORAL LAW

**Freedom in the Educative Society.** By SIR FRED CLARKE. *University of London Press.* 4s. 6d.

Probably no serious subject is more talked about and written about nowadays than how to produce brighter and better citizens. Nor does it end with writing and talking; much is already being done. We have education for citizenship, education for leadership, and education for management; we have child guidance, vocational guidance and marriage guidance. We have training within industry, training on part-time release from industry, and training that is outside industry altogether. Any citizen of these islands who lives within reach of a sizeable town can have himself educated, guided and trained past all recognition. Indeed, it may soon be difficult for the most obdurate citizen to escape the attention of the educators. We live, in fact, in an "educative society," and by that Sir Fred Clarke means a society "which accepts as its overmastering purpose the production of a given type of citizen." The inference is obvious—the liberal idea of the free development of the individual is in danger of being set aside in favour of a regimentation which will oil the bearings of a highly organised society. Many voices have been raised in warning against this danger. Not so many have pointed out that the liberal idea is a comparatively new one, and that until quite recently there was no questioning of the right of society to determine how the young should be brought up, to define the preferred type, and to control the formative influences by which the type was to be produced. Now that the idea of an educative society is with us in full force, the task which confronts the educators is to conceive and apply the idea in a form which is compatible with individual freedom.

That is the problem with which the author of this wise book is concerned. But not everybody will regard it as a wise book. No doubt it will set up the backs of many people who regard themselves as being in the vanguard of educational thought. So much so that it would be easy by a careful selection of points and a by-passing of counter-points to give the impression that the author is a "dangerous reactionary." He takes up, for example, a strongly critical attitude towards that theory of education which is built round the idea that the aim of education is to enable the child to develop his inner potentialities freely. He postulates, too, the necessity for the emergence of an *élite* if the citizens of an efficient industrial society are to remain free. But how, it will be asked, can a society remain free if the keynote of its educational system is not to be the free development of the child? Freedom of the individual must surely imply equality of status, and how can that be compatible with the emergence of an *élite*? The answer to the first question is that some measure of "indoctrination" is a condition of freedom, not a denial of it, that in many popular expositions of the theory of "free development" there is a confusion between the perfectly true doctrine that the effective education of the pupil can be the result only of his own efforts to learn, coming from within, with the very doubtful doctrine that the inner potentialities themselves determine the result. In fact, these inner potentialities determine what the pupil *can* learn; what he *does* learn is very largely determined for him by the prevailing culture. There is a further confusion between freedom as a doctrine of sound practice and freedom as its objective. The freedom we demand in school is a technique employed to ensure that the learning-responses of the child are genuinely his own; but the freedom we take as an objective is a state of being of the whole self. In this sense, freedom is the correlate of mature responsibility and of capacity to carry the burden of that responsibility. It is "a continuing conquest, not an original birthday gift." This brings us to the answer to the second question, for the *élite* are those who are "trained and habituated to continuing conquest in this sense." They will not form a "class"; they will have no distinctive social or political place, but they will be the leaven which gives quality to the whole.

But the main bulwark of freedom in an educative society is—and the author apologises faintly for using a word so little in fashion—*Conscience*. He uses the term in a double sense. In the first place, it implies the need for resolute self-awareness and moral integrity, and, secondly, it stands for a belief in the reality of moral law and moral values. That educators should concern themselves more than they do with the nature of moral sanctions is now an urgent matter, for, "as belief in the reality of moral law slips away, the void is apt to be filled by some false absolute or other, and the acolytes of dictatorship are inexhaustible in their devices for inducing belief; or, if this does not happen, complete moral scepticism, veiled or overt, supervenes."

"Reactionary," then, this author certainly is, but only in the sense that, having examined a number of contemporary concepts, he finds them inadequate, and feels that in discarding some of the ideas which came down to us clad in such terms as "conscience" we may have been throwing kernels into the dustbin and hoping to grow fat and lusty on the husks. Fortunately, he makes it easy even for those who look askance at such terms to come to them without prejudice.

No matter what aspect of the problem he deals with—and to those already mentioned one may add his analysis of the disintegrating effect upon culture of specialised vocations and his exposition of the theory of "moral tensions"—he does so in a manner that would be called thought-provoking if it were not so much like a slow revelation of ultimate truths. Inevitably there is a certain remoteness about it all—inevitably because, as experience in the class-room daily shows, there are large numbers of people to whom the world of abstract thinking remains closed. What, for example, is the connection between Sir Fred Clarke's interpretation of the human situation and the sorry sight which presents itself at Earl's Court tube station half an hour before the kick-off at Stamford Bridge? The author looks for an answer somewhere in the realm of culture—a revitalised culture that is shared by all, one which is to a technological age what the old folk-cultures were to simpler ages. Implicit, too, in his argument is the necessity for the creation of a new mythology, or the revival of an old. Unfortunately, his analysis of our present discontents is more convincing than the note of optimism so anxiously sustained throughout his pages. HUNTER DIACK


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# Week-end Competitions

## No. 974

**Set by Naomi Lewis**

Ancient methods of curing the spleen or encouraging fertility are being discussed by scientists. Prizes are offered for a charm in eight lines of verse for one of the following: alleviating frustration; bringing about a change of government or removing a political figure from office; breaking the habit of smoking; winning a New Statesman Competition; obtaining domestic help; getting through the Customs. Entries by October 26th.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 971

**Set by Sebastian**

The art of ruining one's chances in applying for a job by some careless, all-too-revealing sentence is illustrated by the case of a young man applying for a position at a public school. To the question "What are your hobbies?" he replied "Taking girls out in punts." Competitors are asked to compose a dialogue of up to 150 words commemorating a fatal and preferably subtler gaffe of this kind.

**Report by Sebastian**

I asked for something subtler than the example given in the setting of this competition, but I did not get it. The hopeful man who says, "I like talking to all kinds of people," is not likely to get a job in the Secret Service. "I am used to taking responsibility," will dish one at a Ministry. "I am interested in everything," has wrecked the chances of many an applicant for reviewing, as surely as, "Go anywhere, do anything, can drive car" might be the heraldic device of the middle class unemployable. But such petards needed to be neatly placed with a real affection for disaster, and this I did not find. Brevity got marks, Mr. J. R. Till, for example.

It was a mistake to give more lines to the interviewer than to the candidate. D. R. Barclay's entry could have been cut to its last two lines:

What makes you think you would be suitable as an officer?

Only what I have seen of the other officers, sir . . . They're my type.

Franz had the old dig at school teaching:

Now tell me, what made you decide on school teaching as a career?

Well, I have applied for all sorts of jobs.

I liked the fatal last lines of Tyntax:

How d'you find time to read? I assume you are interested in books?

Well sir, I don't actually read them, but I never miss a review.

One competitor worried me. This was John Grant, who sent in a dialogue where the interviewer says,

And you had to be like Pharaoh's wife, beyond reproach?

There was a tactful covering of the slip in the reply:

Being Mrs. Pharaoh has its points.

But a card comes from Mr. Grant saying, "For Pharaoh read Caesar" and I am puzzled to know whether this charming lapse ought to have a prize—for it certainly ought to lose him a place in this competition. The point is too metaphysical. I suspect Wm. Bliss of selling me a chestnut when he makes the bishop's would-be secretary say, that "in the words of the Apostle Paul, he believed in suffering fools gladly." There was a strong whiff of chestnuts coming home to roast throughout this competition. I award one guinea each to J. R. Till, Terence Melican, W. Wilson, Allan M. Laing, Alfred Bradley and Fergie.

"Married?"
"Er—"

J. R. TILL

"You are unmarried, Mr. Delamere?"
"Completely."
"Comp—? Oh. I suppose you mean you are not even engaged?"
"Unfortunately, that is so."
"H'm. You are competent, I suppose, to teach my son everything he should know before he goes to Eton?"

"Well sir, that's a rather tall order; but, do you know, I think I am."
"Can you encourage in him a love of literature?
"It all depends, sir, on what you mean by literature but I know the sort of thing boys like."
"You mean this Billy Bunter stuff?"
"Well, no. I was rather thinking of the Decameron and the juicier bits of James Joyce."

ALLAN M. LAING

I.—You are experienced in audits, Mr. Hope?
A.—Very. Been lucky in that respect. Years ago a colleague over me put me wise on many little points. You know, when the auditor's assistants are ploughing through the subsidiary books, under your direction, a bit of bluff can be quite useful.
I.—Indeed.
A.—Well, I mean to say . . . W. WILSON

"There is one point, however, that we must be sure of, Mr. Brown. You will appreciate that as a temperance association we cannot engage staff who have, er, other views, shall we say. Have you signed the pledge?"
"Well, sir, I've never had occasion to do that, because I was brought up in a very strict household you see, and I've always lived in the strictest sobriety. I may say that I feel nothing but loathing for all forms of alcohol, especially whisky."
"Thank you, Mr. Brown. You will hear from us."

TERENCE MELICAN

CANDIDATE: I would run the Competition on Socialist lines.
CHAIRMAN OF *New Statesman*: Could you explain, Mr . . . Uh?
CANDIDATE: From the point of view of the weekly Competition in *The New Statesman*, it should be organised in regard to a Socialist point of view, with no non-union workers. As regards management, the competitors should have full representation, especially as regards rate-fixing. I would propose "dirt" money for work in French and German. As regards rates I would propose to call competitors on a rota to write the winning entries. As regards other competitors I would propose a flat rate paid out of decasualisation as in the case of dockers, so as to abolish the barefaced Stakhanovism of the present system . . .
CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr . . Uh. . Fergie I think it was? Well, we have a few other candidates to see. We'll let you know. FERGIE

Now Miss Demeanour, why do you want to join the Civil Service?
Well, sir, I had an idea . . . . ALFRED BRADLEY

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## Appointments Vacant

*None of the vacancies in these columns relates to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or a woman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless he or she is excepted from the provision of the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, or the vacancy is for employment excepted from the provision of that Order.*

CIVIL Service Commissioners invite applics. for the permanent and pensionable post of Senior Assistant Director of Exams. in Civil Service Commission. Sal. scale £1,100×£35—£1,320 (men), £950×£30—£1,160 (women). Applicants must be University graduates with honours (pref. first-class) in their subject. Teaching exp. will be taken into account; examining or interviewing exp. will be an advantage and some administrative exp. is desirable. They must have been born on or after Jan. 1, 1898. Senior Assistant Directors of Exams. (at present 2 in number) are responsible under Director of Exams. for adminis. and organising work arising out of the examination and interviewing of candidates for appointment to the Civil Service. They supervise the work of Assistant Directors on preparing schemes for exams. and syllabuses, and setting of exam. papers and marking of candidates' work (done by outside examiners); duties include responsibility for appointments to higher posts in the service and to professional grades by interview, and negotiation with other Govt. Depts. and educational bodies. There may be opportunities for suitable candidates for transfer later to the Administrative Class of the Home Civil Service. Post will be filled by competitive interview: full partics. and applic. forms from Secretary, Civil Service Commission, Burlington Gdns. W.1 (quoting No. 2290) to whom completed applic. form must be returned by Oct. 30.

APPLICS. invited for the Appointment of a civilian Lecturer in the English and History Dept. of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, London, S.E.10, in Jan., 1949, or earlier. Applicants should possess an Honours Degree in one or more of the following subjects:—History, English, Economics, Geography, Modern Greats. Their principal interests should be in the affairs of the modern world. An interest in other humanities, e.g. Art, Music, the Drama, is also desirable. Previous exp. either in Schools, Universities or in educational branches of the services, pref. in the Royal Navy, is desirable but not essential. Applicants must be natural born British subjects. Starting sal. will be in the range £360 to £600 according to age and approved post-graduate exp. Advancement to Senior Lecturer (sal. range £650-£850) and to higher posts is possible. The appointment carries the benefits of the Federated Superannuation Scheme for Universities: Applics., accompanied by names of 3 refs. and statement of previous exp., to be sent (at once) to Secretary of Admiralty (C.E. Branch), Admiralty, London, S.W.1, from whom further partics. obtainable, by Oct. 30.

ESSEX C.C. Applics. invited from men and women for two following posts in the Essex Record Office: 1. (Senior) Assistant Archivist, within A.P.T. V (£520-£570). Candidates should have an appropriate univ. degree (or similar qualific.), a detailed knowledge of Quarter Sessions, Estate, Parochial and other Local Records and of Modern County Council Records, and some exp. in archive research and publications. 2. Assistant Archivist, within A.P.T. II (£420-£465). Candidates should have appropriate univ. degree (or similar qualific.) or practical archive and research exp. in Local Records. Duties will include cataloguing, calendaring, etc., under the supervision of the County Archivist. Further partics. of conditions of service can be obtained on application. Applics. (in case of Post 2 in own handwriting), stating age, qualifics. and exp., to be sent to Clerk of County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, as soon as possible. Canvassing directly/indirectly is forbidden.

LEEDS College of Art. Principal: E. E. Pullee, A.R.C.A. School of Architecture, Head: W. A. Eden, B.Arch., A.R.I.B.A. Applics. invited for post of Senior Lecturer in Architectural History and Research, and Librarian. Candidates should be graduates of a British University or should hold the Associateship of the R.I.B.A. Specialised training in architecture or librarianship is not essential, but candidates should be prepared to give evidence of special interest in the history of architecture. Sal. scale: £700×£25—£800. Additions for degree or equivalent and approved training. Further partics. and applic. forms, to be returned by Oct. 30, obtainable by sending s.a. foolscap env. to Director of Education, Education Offices, Leeds, 1.

CITY and County of Bristol. Applics. invited appointment Assistant Educational Psychologist (woman) in connection with Child Guidance Clinic and schools of the city. Salary £495, rising by annual increments of £20 to £560 p.a. Previous exp. may be taken into consideration when determining commencing salary. Candidates should possess Honours or Research Degree in Psychology combined with exp. in teaching children. Pref. given to candidates who have had practical exp. of work in a Clinic or of research in child psychology. Applic. forms obtained from G. H. Sylvester, Chief Education Officer, Council House, College Green, Bristol, 1, to be returned as soon as possible accompanied by copies of not more than two testimonials.

IMMEDIATELY or January required: (1) English Mistress; (2) Mistress for Middle School English, History & Maths; (3) Art Mistress; (4) Asst. Matron; (5) Head Lady Cook, or Third Asst. Lady Cook to work under expd. Lady Housekeeper; (6) Matron-Housekeeper. Resident posts. Burnham Scale. Apply Hollington Park School, St. Leonards-on-Sea.

## Appointments Vacant—continued

DEVON C.C. Care of Children Cttee. Children Act, 1948. Applics. invited from trained social workers for following posts:—1. Deputy Children's Officer (man or woman pref. between age of 30 and 45) at a salary in accordance with grade VI of the A.P.T. Division of Natl. Scale of Salaries (£595-£660) to assist the Children's Officer in the Administration of the department and to take responsibility in her absence. 2. Women not over 45 at salaries in accordance with A.P.T. I (£390-£435) and A.P.T. II (£420-£465) and men and women not over 45 on A.P.T. III (£450-£495) to carry out work including visiting of foster homes and children and other duties under direction of the Children's Officer. Candidates for above mentioned posts must have had wide exp. of case work, and for the two senior posts, of social admin. and a knowledge of legislation dealing with children and young persons and some exp. of the running of Children's Homes and Nurseries will be an advantage. Travelling officers must be able to drive a car. The Council has a scheme of hire-purchase and travelling allowances are paid in accdnce. with Council's scale. Appointment will be terminable by 3 months' notice in writing on either side and subject to provisions of Local Governments Superann. Acts. Applic. forms obtainable from Children's Officer, Bradninch Hall, Castle St. Exeter, and must be returned to H. A. Davis, Clerk to the County Council, The Castle, Exeter, by Oct. 30.

HAMPSHIRE C.C. Appointment of Asst. Superintendent of Children's Homes. Applics. invited for above appointment for women holding recognised child-care qualifics. and with administrative exp. and practical knowledge of residential care of children, partic. of babies and infants. Person appointed will be reqd. to assist the Superintendent in administration and supervision of all the Council's Homes & Nurseries throughout the County. Accomm. is not provided but person appointed will be reqd. to live in/near Winchester. Appointment will be in Grade II of A.P.T. division of the N.J.C. scale, £420 by annual inments of £15 to £465 p.a. Post is superannuable and is subject to passing of a medical exam. Person appointed will be reqd. to keep a car for which travelling allowances will be paid in accordance with Council's scale. Further partics. and applic. form, which must be returned by Oct. 25, from Children's Officer, 2 Clifton Terrace, Winchester. By permission of Min. of Labour and Natl. Service under Control of Engagement Order, 1947.

COUNTY Borough of Dudley. Children's Dept. Appointment of Boarding-out Officer. Applics. invited from suitably qualified men or women for above appointment at a salary in accordance with Scale A.P.T.I. of Natl. Scale of Salaries (£390 by £15 to £435 p.a.). Person appointed will be responsible to the Children's Officer for supervision of boarded-out children and other duties under the Children Act, 1948. Possession of a Social Science Diploma or other appropriate qualific. will be an advantage. Applics. from persons who have successfully completed the Home Office Child Care Course will also be considered. Appointment is subject to provisions of the Local Govt. Superann. Act, 1937, and successful candidate will be reqd. to pass a medical exam. Applics., stating age, exp. and qualifics. and giving names and addresses of 3 persons to whom ref. can be made, to Miss B. J. Langridge, Children's Officer, 7 St. James's Road, Dudley, Worcs., by Oct. 23.

COUNTY Borough of Wolverhampton. Children Dept. Appointment of (Female) Boarding-out Visitor. Applics. for above post invited from suitably qualified social workers. Sal. in accordance with Miscellaneous Division (Grade I) of National Scales (£315×£15—£360 p.a.). The person appointed will be requd. to assist in the boarding-out of children and with the case-work referred to the Department. Applics. in envelopes endorsed "Boarding-out Visitor," together with names of three persons to whom reference may be made, should be forwarded to J. Brock Allon, Town Clerk, by Oct. 23.

LONDON County Council. Furzedown Training College, Welham Rd. S.W.17. Applics. invited for post of Deputy-Principal (woman). Duties begin in Jan., 1949, if poss. Teaching and training college experience and insight into modern educational theory and practice essential. Applicants should offer in addition teaching in one aspect of the curriculum, pref. in Education, art and craft, English, or Science. Training College scale salary as senior lecturer plus allowance of £100 p.a. Applic. forms from Principal and returnable to her by Nov. 6. (1970.)

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